THE

INDEPENDENT WHIG:

OR, A

DEFENCE

OF

Primitive Chriſtianity,

And of Our

Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment,

AGAINST

The Exorbitant CLAIMS and ENCROACHMENTS of Fanatical and Diſaffected CLERGYMEN.

THE SEVENTH EDITION,

With ADDITIONS and AMENDMENTS.

VOL. I.

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M.DCC.XLII.

NOSCE · TEIPSUM
Ambrose Isted Esq.

TO THE

LOWER HOUSE

OF

CONVOCATION.

YOU, Gentlemen, who are the Repreſentatives of the Clergy of *England*, are proper Patrons of a Work, which treats of Religion, and the Clergy. It is written to promote Liberty, Virtue, and Piety; the Intereſts of which, I hope, you will always eſpouſe, and eſteem as your own; and will conſequently approve my Deſign, and give

me your Thanks, whatever may have been the Succeſs of my Endeavours.

THE many wild and unſcriptural Claims ſtarted, and impetuouſly maintained, by very many of thoſe whom you repreſent, (and I wiſh I could ſay denied, though but faintly, by any conſiderable Number of others) gave Occaſion to the following Sheets; and, having in them ſhewn to my Brethren, the Laity, the Abſurdity and Impiety of thoſe Claims, by Arguments fetched from Reaſon, the Goſpel, and the Laws of our Country; I ſhall, in this Addreſs to yourſelves, endeavour to convince you, that it is your Intereſt to drop them; and if I can ſucceed in this, I preſume, that all other Arguments may be uſeleſs.

THESE Gentlemen, in the Heat of their Demands and Contention for Power, have gone ſo far towards *Rome*, and borrowed ſo many of her Principles, that I ſee no other Medium left for them, but either to proceed on in their Journey thither, (which,

(which, as they have managed Matters, is now a very ſhort one) or to turn back to the Principles of the *Reformation*, (a very long Journey, I confeſs!) and accept of the Biſhop of * *Bangor*'s Scheme, as much as they hate it and him. That Scheme, though it may not be altogether ſo palatable, yet is a ſafe Scheme: And though it does not intitle them to all the Power and Wealth in *England*, yet it ſecures to them what they have.

CONSIDER, Gentlemen, that you cannot take as much of Popery as you pleaſe, and leave the reſt. *Machiavel* has long ſince told us, that no Government can ſubſiſt long but upon its original Foundation, and by recurring often to the Principles upon which it was firſt founded. It will indeed ſtand upon no other; and when that is ſapped and undermined, the Superſtructure muſt fall to the Ground, the old Inhabitants muſt find out new Materials, erect new Buildings upon other Founda-

* Dr. *Benjamin Hoadley*, now Lord Biſhop of *Wincheſter*.

tions, and are, for the moſt part, undone by the Experiment.

THE firſt Principles of our Proteſtant Church are the Principles of the *Reformation*; namely, the ſpiritual Supremacy of the Crown; the Right of the Laity to judge for themſelves; the forming of all Eccleſiaſtical Polity by the Legiſlature; and, conſequently, the creating of Clergymen by the Civil Authority; a Power forgot by too many of the Clergy, and remembred, againſt their Wills, by the Laity. Whoever would maintain the *Reformation*, muſt maintain theſe Principles; or embrace *Popery*, if he deſert them. Whether the ſolemn Oaths of the Clergy in general have been ſufficient Pledges and Motives for their believing and defending them, I appeal to their Behaviour, and their Writings.

BEING the ſworn Servants of the Law, many of them have avowedly contradicted and bid Defiance to the Law. Being entruſted with ſerving and inſtructing the

the People, they have deceived and ſet up for commanding the People. Being choſen by the Crown to miniſterial Offices, they have claimed a Power above the Crown; from which they acknowledge, upon Oath, to have received all Power. They have done what in them lay, to make the Mercy of God of none Effect, by damning whom they pleaſed; and to diſarm his Juſtice, by pardoning whom they would. They have made *Heaven itſelf to wait for the Sentence from the Prieſt's Mouth*, and *God himſelf to follow the Judgment of the Prieſt*. They have pretended *to oblige God Almighty to open and ſhut Heaven's Gates*. They have aſſerted, that *the Prieſthood is a Princely Power, greater and more venerable than that of the Emperor*: That *the ſpiritual Government* (that is, a Government by Prieſts) *is farther above the Civil Power, than Heaven is above the Earth*: That *a Biſhop is to be honoured as God*: That "the "Revenue of Prieſts ought to be greater

" than the Revenue of Kings: That
" greater Puniſhment is due to an Of-
" fence againſt a Prieſt, than to an Of-
" fence againſt a King: That Kings and
" Queens are to bow down before the
" Prieſt, with their Face towards the
" Earth, and to lick up the Duſt of his
" Feet: That it is the Royal Office of
" Kings and Queens, to carry the Prieſt
" in their Boſom, or on their Shoulders:
" That Great Men ought not to ſay, *My*
" *Chaplain*, in any other Senſe than we
" ſay, MY KING, or MY GOD."

As to the King's Nomination of Biſhops, and the Power that he has over the Convocation, they have maintained, that " The Church ſhould as reaſonably have " the Nomination and depoſing of " Kings; and that it is as reaſonable, that " the Parliament ſhould neither meet or " act without the Biſhop's Licence and " Authority: That the Chief Magiſtrate " is bound to ſubmit to the Biſhop, who " may excommunicate him: That it is

" a

" a Contradiction, and an Impoſſibility,
" for any State to have Authority over
" the Church, that is, over the Prieſts:
" That the Prieſts Power extends to the
" ſettling of Faſting, and Feaſting, and
" Cloaths: That thoſe Clergy, who
" comply with the Government, and yet
" retain their old Principles, are the beſt
" Part, and moſt numerous of the Cler-
" gy"; that is, that thoſe of the Clergy, who are perjured, are the beſt and moſt numerous. They have decreed, that *to maintain the Sovereignty of* England *is in the Three Eſtates of* England, namely, in King, Lords, and Commons, *is a damnable Principle.* They have aſſerted, that the *Lords and Commons have no more Share in the making of Laws, than a Beggar has in one's Alms: That all Subjects are Slaves, as to Life and Property:* " And that Re-
" ſiſtance is not lawful for the Mainte-
" nance of the Liberties of ourſelves or
" others; nor for the Defence of Reli-
" gion; nor for the Preſervation of

" Church and State; nor for the Salva-
" tion of a Soul; no, nor for the Re-
" demption of the whole World."

THERE is a choice Catalogue of these extravagant Doctrines, collected in a Pamphlet published some Years since, and intituled, *A new Catechism, with Dr.* Hickes's *Thirty-nine Articles*; and all of them taken out of the Writings of Men in the highest Reputation among you. Yes, Gentlemen, all these impious, mad, and selfish Doctrines have been maintained by those of your Order, and never yet contradicted by any public Act of your Body. On the contrary, with your usual Charity and Good-nature, you have fallen upon those who exposed them, tho' they were evidently the very Corner-stones of *Popery*, and a flat Contradiction to the whole Spirit and Progress of the *Reformation.*

THERE is no Medium between *Popery* and the *Reformation*; that is, between the claiming of any Power in Religion, and the

the renouncing of all Power in Religion (as you will find fully made out in the following Sheets). The latter is the Characteriſtic of a Proteſtant Miniſter, and the former the black Mark of a Popiſh Prieſt. You have it in your Choice, Gentlemen, which you will chuſe to reſemble.

IF you do not think fit to accept the *Biſhop* of *Bangor*'s *Proteſtant* Scheme, which is the ſame with that of the *Reformation*, and has been ever ſince the Law of the Land, there is but one Choice left you, namely, that of working about a *Popiſh* Revolution, *per fas & nefas*; of bringing undiſguiſed Popery and the Inquiſition into the Church; direct Slavery upon your Country; and upon your own Order, the Neceſſity of throwing yourſelves blindly upon the Mercy of the Court of *Rome*, for her Protection, and Licence to preſerve your Dignities and Revenues.

YOU have no Poſſibility of keeping clear of the *Pope* and the *Regale* both. The King will not part with his Prerogative; the Parliament will not give up its Authority; nor will the People intirely part with their Senſes. And for the Biſhop of *Rome*, you would do well to remember what tender Uſage your Predeceſſors received at his Hands. He indeed always diſcountenanced and oppreſſed them. The lazy Monks, and debauched Friers, were his Darlings, and peculiar Care. They were thoroughly detached from the Intereſts of the Laity, thorough Dependents upon the Holy Father: They were therefore diſtinguiſhed as his Spiritual Janizaries, and the Guards of the Papacy; and to them he gave away the Revenues and Maintenance of the Secular Clergy, not ſo much truſted by him.

IF you remember this, you will eaſily judge how much more it is your Intereſt to ſubmit to the eaſy and gentle Autho-

rity

rity of the Prince, to live under the Protection of the Laws of your Country, by which your Income, and all your Immunities, are aſcertained and ſecured, than to live expoſed to the Diſtruſts of a foreign cruel Court, to the Rapine of foreign and needy Prieſts, who will be perpetually quartered upon you, perpetually drawing Money from you: Nay, probably it will grow a Maxim in the *Roman Politics*, that *you muſt be kept poor.*

BUT beſides, however good the Intentions may be of ſuch Men amongſt yourſelves, or of thoſe whom you repreſent, to become the Subjects, or, as you may vainly imagine, the Confederates of *Rome*; they will, in all Likelihood, find it utterly impoſſible to execute their Deſigns; and muſt, in all Appearance, venture their preſent Poſſeſſions upon the Succeſs of ſuch Deſigns. And if they ſhould happen to ſucceed, they may have the Glory indeed of the Wickedneſs; but the Rewards will be, for the moſt part,

reaped

reaped by new Comers, who had no Share in the Toil. Foreign Eccleſiaſtics will be the firſt in Favour, and the higheſt in Place: They will carry off your Honours, and your Preferments: The Sincerity of your Converſion will be queſtioned, or pretended to be queſtioned: There will quickly grow a Diſtinction between *Old Papiſts* and *New Converts*; as in *Spain* and *Portugal*, where a wide Difference is made between old Chriſtians and new; which Difference holds for many Generations; and, in ſhort, all Countenance will be ſhewn, all Favours will be granted, to thoſe who never bowed their Heads to *Baal*. Your Behaviour to the late K. *James* will alſo be remembred, tho' you have forgot his to you; and you will be called *Ingrates*, *New Hypocrites*, or *Old Rebels*.

I AM in hopes, Reverend Sirs, that from all theſe Conſiderations, the Gentlemen of theſe Notions will find Reaſon to look back to their Original at the *Reformation*, and to preach up the Principles upon

upon which it ſtands, ſince they are like to ſtand or fall by theſe Principles. Let them veer about once more; they know how to do it; and I will be the firſt to declare, that they have been once in the Right, once reconciled their Views to the Liberties of *England*.

I MIGHT likewiſe fetch an Argument from their Aukwardneſs in Politics, to convince them that they ought to be Proteſtants. They have made it manifeſt, by many Trials, and long Experience, that they are but heavy Intriguers, and ſadly want both the Temper and Talents of Politicians. The Proteſtant Religion, being a plain one, ſupported by obvious Truth and common Senſe, and requiring no Managements or Fineſſe to make it go down with the People, would fit them well enough, if they could be content with it. But it is quite otherwiſe with the Religion of *Rome*; which, being a ſurpriſing Medley of various and contradictory Parts, requires the utmoſt Addreſs,

dreſs, Delicacy, and Skill, to keep them from falling to pieces. And, in this reſpect, the Church of *Rome* owes its Figure and Preſervation to the Court of *Rome*, where all the niceſt Secrets of Power are underſtood, all the moſt curious Arts in Politics are practiſed; where every Abſurdity is finely diſguiſed, every Cruelty artfully concealed; where, in fine, they have the Knack of making People pleaſed with being abuſed, and of forgetting, that they are Slaves, or of never knowing it.

HITHERTO, Gentlemen, it has been otherwiſe with you. Our Pretenders of this Caſt have but groſly aped Popery. Their Aims have been too open, their Management too coarſe. A blunt Demand at once for all the Wealth, and Reverence, and Power of *England*, was ſo ridiculous, that, had we not before known their unhappy State of Ignorance, we ſhould have thought, that they had been in Jeſt when they made it. Nor has

that

that incurable Appetite of theirs, which they cannot hide, of combating Conſcience with downright Force, and brutiſh Violence, done them leſs Harm. In ſhort, good Counſel they have ſeldom taken; their fooliſh Counſels they never could conceal; and, God be thanked, their wicked Counſels they never yet have been able, thoroughly, to execute. They are, in truth, but doggrel Politicians. *Engliſh Prieſtcraft* is as coarſe as the *Romiſh Prieſtcraft* is fine. *Theirs is the Depths of Satan, and* OURS *his Shallows*; as is excellently ſaid by the late Mr. *Samuel Johnſon.*

THE *Romiſh* Clergy choſe the Days of Darkneſs to ſow their Frauds in. They vended their holy Trifles, when Ignorance had increaſed the Number of Buyers. They planted their Power in the fertile Soil of Superſtition; and, by keeping the People poor, wretched, ignorant, wicked, and fearful, as they every-where do, they ſtill maintain their Dominion.

BUT

BUT our High Gentlemen, who both know and lament, that this Nation has ſeen more Days of Light and Liberty (which indeed are ſeldom ſeparated) ſince the *Revolution*, than ever it ſaw before, have yet prepoſterouſly choſen that very Time of Light and Liberty to advance all the wildeſt Claims of Popery, and all the vileſt Tenets of Slavery. What could they mean? Did they not know, that the more Men find the Uſe of their Underſtanding, the more they are loth to part with it? And that thoſe Men who are willing to part with their Underſtandings, muſt have very ſhallow ones?

THE *Engliſh* Laity have been uſed pretty much, of late, to think for themſelves; and we find, as doubtleſs, Gentlemen, you do, that the more Men know of Church Power, the leſs they like it. They ſee that Prieſtly Pomp always ſtands on Lay Miſery; that where the Prieſts are Princes, the People are the loweſt Slaves; and that Church Power always

riſes

riſes with the Fall of Liberty, and the Decay of Knowledge.

THE Popiſh Prieſts too, as they propagated their lying Tenets in the dark, ſo they did it ſlily, and by well-weighed Gradations. Every Intention of theirs had its proper Seaſon. The *Fire of Purgatory* was kindled at one time; *Indulgences* were hatched at another; *Tranſubſtantiation* ſtole in at a convenient Hour; and all their Doctrines of Gain and Power were broached at politic Diſtances, and as Opportunities invited.

BUT our High Prieſts, as they have obſerved neither Meaſure nor Mercy in their Demands upon us; ſo neither have they made them at due and diſcreet Intervals. By overloading the Cart, they have overturned it. They have frightened us with the broad and black Cloud of their Pretenſions, and made Men unanimouſly oppoſe that Heap of Claims and Abſurdities, which, had they been wiſe, we might have been brought to ſwallow ſingly.

ſingly. They wanted Patience, as well as Policy.

WE were not yet ripe for Popery. We had Judgment enough to ſee, that all thoſe Claims, all thoſe new Doctrines, evidently and ſolely tended to the Clergy's Advantage, and our Undoing. And we thought it was as conſiſtent with natural Equity, and common Senſe, that we ſhould be Judges in our own Caſe, as that you ſhould be in yours. Indeed, if any amongſt you had maintained Doctrines evidently grievous to yourſelves, and manifeſtly tending to the Knowledge and external Happineſs of the People, we ſhould at leaſt have thought you in earneſt. If, for Example, you had contended, that the Prieſts ſhould faſt three Days in the Week, the Laity only when they pleaſed; that the Prieſts ſhould be entirely at the Mercy of the People for a Maintenance; ſhould be reſtrained from taking above Thirty or Forty Pounds a Year Salary; be forbid all Pomp and Affluence, be-

cauſe

cauſe they vitiate the Mind, and breed Pride and Lazineſs; two Faults heinous in a Miniſter of God: I ſay, if you had contended for ſuch Liberty in the Laity, and for ſuch rigorous Reſtraints upon yourſelves, it would have carried in it the Face of Sincerity and Self-denial. But, for Prieſts, who are known to have been, at firſt, the Alms-men of the People, (and who moſtly are ſtill educated by the Charity, and maintained by the Benevolence, of the Laity) to talk of Palaces, Revenues, nay, Thrones and Principalities, to be for aſſuming Empire over their Maſters, and growing great by the Poverty of the People, is ſuch a Stretch of Arrogance and Folly, as cannot be aggravated; as it would not be credible, did we not ſee it. The Pretenſions of the Great *Turk* are not half ſo deteſtable.

WHO would not rather be a Slave to a *Monarch*, than to a *Monk?* The Oppreſſion of Temporal Tyrants never has been, never can be, ſo great as the Oppreſſion of Prieſts.

Prieſts. Temporal Tyrants only make their Slaves as miſerable as *Laymen* can do. They take almoſt their All; but the little that is left, they leave them to uſe as they pleaſe. The Prieſt, where he has Power enough, exerciſes his Tyranny over the Bellies and Palates of his more miſerable Vaſſals, and ſuffers them to eat (if he leave them any thing to eat) but what he pleaſes, and when he pleaſes.

IN Truth, the Subjects of Prieſts abroad are in a viler State than the Prieſts Black Cattle: They are worſe fed, and not more knowing.

CAN you deny, Gentlemen, that the more Power the Prieſt poſſeſſes, juſt ſo much the more Men ſuffer in their Souls and Bodies? Nor can it be otherwiſe: Power produces Pride and Debauchery in the Clergy, and Vaſſalage begets Baſeneſs and Poverty in the People. Whatever is gained to the Clergy, is gained from the Laity; ſo that for them to be rich, we muſt be Beggars; that

they may be Lords, we muſt be Slaves. This I take to be ſelf-evident.

WILL you, or can you ſay, Gentlemen, that thoſe Claims are conducing to the Welfare of Mankind; which, wherever they prevail, do effectually diveſt Mankind of every thing that ſweetens human Life, and renders it deſirable, or indeed ſupportable? Is that Power for our Benefit, which diſarms us of our Faculties, cows our Minds with ſlaviſh Fears, and gives us up a Prey to thoſe Men, whoſe Strength lies in our Weakneſs, whoſe Proſperity is owing to our Undoing? This is what it has always done, and what it does at this Day in *Spain*, *Italy*, and other Prieſt-ridden Countries: And this is what it would as effectually do in *England*, if *Engliſhmen* would ſuffer it.

THESE Claims of yours, Gentlemen, have done you great Prejudice. They have made Men afraid of your Spirit, which ſeems to them to be mercileſs and inſatiable. So that, if you are begrudged what

what you have, you muſt thank yourſelves; it is owing to your claiming what you ought not to have. If a Clergyman enjoy the Tythes of Part of my Eſtate, by virtue of the Law; and, not content with that, would have Tythes of the Whole, in ſpite of the Law; it is natural enough for me to think, that the Man is a Knave, who would have no Man's Property ſecured by the Law but his own.

NOTHING is more common with you than to call the Impropriations of the Abbey-Lands by the dreadful Name of *Sacrilege*. You ſay, ſome of you have ſaid it in Print, and many more in the Pulpit, that ſuch Impropriation was robbing the Church. What Church, Gentlemen? Was it not the Church of *Rome?* And are you of that Church? It is certain, that the *Reformed Proteſtant* Church of *England* never poſſeſſed any of theſe Lands; and how you, who are *Proteſtants*, and not Succeſſors to the *Monks*, can hold from the *Popiſh Monks*, by Divine Right,

Right, Lands and Immunities, which theſe gluttonous and cheating Vermin acquired by diabolical Rogueries; is ſuch a Riddle as can only come from Eccleſiaſtics, but can never be ſolved by Laymen. Did you ever hear, Gentlemen, that the primitive Preachers of *Chriſt* ſet up for being Heirs to the Riches and Revenues of the *Heathen Temples*, when they were deſerted or demoliſhed? And, in my Opinion, theſe Pagan Revenues were more honeſtly got, as well as more innocently uſed, than the Lands and Income of the *Popiſh Monaſteries*.

OUR Gentlemen of this Caſt have long provoked one Part of the World, long deceived the other, by their Cant of *Divine Right*; which, tho' a very Jeſt in itſelf, and long ſince exploded, is a Title which they fix to all their Poſſeſſions, let them come by them how they will. This is ſhameful Boldneſs. It is certain, that the Goſpel has not given you one Foot of Land, or one Shilling of Money; nor did ever

God Almighty appear perſonally to do it by Word of Mouth. Your Church is a Creature of the Conſtitution, you are Creatures of the Law: And you muſt evidently belye Divine Right, if you pretend to derive from thence, what all the World ſees you owe to ſecular Bounty; I will not ſay to devout Frauds.

IF you could be but perſuaded to reconcile your Principles and Pretenſions to the Security and Happineſs of Mankind, all Mankind would be reconciled to you and your Pretenſions. I do not remember to have ever heard the Clergy contemned, where they did not firſt deſerve Contempt. When any of them depart from the Meekneſs of Miniſters, nobody will pay them the Regard due to Miniſters. Such who intermeddle in every thing, will be reſpected in nothing. They who oppoſe every public Good, every Action favourable to Liberty, and beneficent to the World, will be deemed Foes to Liberty, and to the World. Such who promote

Strife

Strife and Perſecution, will be reckoned Enemies to Peace and Charity; and thoſe who are at the Head of all public Miſchiefs, will themſelves be thought a public Miſchief. If they promote the known Principles, and endeavour to ſupport the known and main Pillars, of Popery, can they expect to be treated as Proteſtants? If they promote Rebellion, and practiſe Perjury, can they either be accounted good Subjects or Chriſtians? And if they are Patrons of Tyranny, and the Promoters of Immorality, what Quarter can they expect to find in a *free Country*, or amongſt *Men of Virtue?*

IF you ask me, *Why all this from a Layman to his* ghoſtly Guides? The Anſwer is ready —— The Work was neceſſary; and, Gentlemen, thoſe of your Order made it neceſſary. The Intereſt of Truth and Liberty was concerned, and indeed at ſtake, by the conſtant Attacks of thoſe of your Robe upon them; which Attacks were ſo far from being diſavowed

by you, that the wicked Authors of them were not only treated as the chief Champions of the Church's Cauſe; but all who oppoſed them have been fallen upon with the ſterneſt Outrage, with the utmoſt Bitterneſs of Spirit; together with lying Calumnies, uncharitable Suggeſtions, and baſe and brutiſh Language; their uſual Weapons, offenſive and defenſive.

IT is worth while to mention the great Want of Sincerity in the Conduct of ſuch Men on this Occaſion. Whenever they think it ſeaſonable, in Converſation, to uphold the mad Principles of *Hickes*, and of the other Proteſtant Papiſts and Nonjurors, (though, if ever there was ſuch a thing as Blaſphemy in the World, it is to be met with in their Writings, in the moſt daring Colours) they never fail to ſhew themſelves their Advocates. But when they think, that a Defence of theſe Reveries will do a Prejudice to the Cauſe, with thoſe of your People, who have a Notion of Religion and the *Reformation*,

or

or among Men, who, they know, can expoſe theſe Reveries: Then, Gentlemen, they either ſhameleſly deny, that theſe Writers maintain what they do maintain; or ſay, that the Clergy are not anſwerable for the Whimſies of particular Doctors.

THESE diſhoneſt Shifts, theſe baſe Practices, compounded of Knavery and Lyes, are common amongſt too many of your Order. Yes, Gentlemen, to the Diſgrace of common Candour, and the Reproach of Religion, they are very common amongſt the High Clergy. I myſelf have frequently found them; and I believe, that every one, who has had any Converſation with them, has as frequently found them.

NOW, that theſe Principles (ſeveral of which I have already laid together in this *Dedication*) are aſſerted in the Books of your Non-ſwearing and For-ſwearing Brethren, I appeal to the Books themſelves: That they are impious, falſe, anti-chriſtian, and deſtructive of human So-

ciety, of all ſocial Virtues, and all civil Happineſs, I appeal to common Senſe, and to the known State of thoſe miſerable Countries where they prevail: And, that they have been either adopted or approved by all the High Clergy, I appeal to their many Quotations from them, and to their conſtantly oppoſing every Proceeding againſt them.

GENTLEMEN, it is of much Conſequence to you, to clear yourſelves from the Imputation of maintaining or adhering to ſuch ungodly, ſuch miſchievous Tenets, which, without conſulting the revealed Will of God, appear deteſtable to the common Light of Reaſon: Tenets, which abrogate the Juſtice and Mercy of God, and call his very Being in queſtion; and Tenets, which would for ever baniſh all Peace and Security from amongſt Men, and from the Face of the Earth. Conſider, that you cannot take one Step in aſſerting or countenancing them, without direct Perjury. You have, upon Oath, renounced

renounced *all Power of any kind or ſort whatſoever*, but what you receive from the *King* and the *Law*. Will you, after this ſolemn Appeal to God, by an Oath, ſacred amongſt *Barbarians* and *Infidels*, appeal to all the World, that you are perjured, by maintaining, as too many do in their Writings and Sermons, that they have a Power, which they neither derive from the *King* nor the *Law?*

SURE it muſt be a melancholy Reflection to theſe Gentlemen, in point of Credit and Reputation, (for I ſay nothing of Conſcience) that, whilſt they thus diſtinguiſh themſelves from *Low Churchmen*, whoſe great Crime conſiſts in not mocking God, and leaping over Conſcience and Oaths; they do, at the ſame time, diſtinguiſh themſelves from *Chriſtianity* itſelf, which, above all other Religions, diſclaims Power, and, more than all other Religions, abhors *Inſincerity* and *falſe Swearing*.

CAN you, Gentlemen, reconcile their Behaviour, ſince the *Revolution*, to the Underſtanding of the People, or to any Man's Conſcience but their own? If the Doctrine of *Hereditary Right* be true, as many of them eternally and fiercely contend, how could they ſwear to Princes made by *Act of Parliament?* And if the Doctrine of *Paſſive Obedience* be true, how came they to ſwear to a Government founded upon open and evident *Reſiſtance*, and to be inſtrumental themſelves in that Reſiſtance? Their particular Behaviour to his preſent Majeſty cannot yet be forgot. Be ſo good to let us know, what Security he found from their Oaths; or what Aſſiſtance the High Clergy gave Him againſt the late Rebellion, in purſuance of theſe Oaths? Can Men, who ſhew, by glaring Actions, that they value not their own Souls, do any Good to the Souls of other Men?

IF you would clear yourſelves from the Imputation of ſupporting or favouring

ſuch

ſuch monſtrous Principles, you muſt do it openly and avowedly, in full and expreſs Words, free from that Equivocation which ſome of your Order are much ſuſpected of, upon the moſt ſolemn and ſacred Occaſions. You have been ready enough to cenſure many good Books, and many worthy Propoſitions: Be ingenuous for this once, Gentlemen; expoſe the Blaſphemies of thoſe of your own Body, and brand the Authors of them with thoſe Names of Infamy which they deſerve, and which you never want, whenever you think fit to *call Names*. And if you fairly renounce ill Company, you will not be cenſured, as you have been, for not cenſuring their Impieties. The *Convocation* at *Oxford*, in the Days of Tyranny, were ſufficiently forward and explicit in damning, by their deteſtable *Decree*, ſince worthily burnt by the proper Hand of the common Hangman, by Order of the Legiſlature; I ſay, that black Aſſembly were forward and clear enough in damning

all theſe Principles of Liberty, which ever have been, and ever will be, the Principles of *wiſe Men*, and *free Men*. Conſult your own Reputation, and the Welfare of Mankind, by treading in Steps directly contrary to thoſe of that wicked Aſſembly.

I CANNOT paſs over in Silence, that ſhameful Want of Charity found amongſt too many of you, and every Day complained of to no Purpoſe. Allowing Charity to be a Chriſtian Grace, (and the Apoſtle calls it the higheſt) I would be glad to know in what Inſtance you practiſe that Grace yourſelves, or promote it in others. As to ſuch who deny the regular Means of Salvation to all Communions, except their own and that of *Rome*, they bring this Charge home to their own Door; ſince their Courteſy to thoſe of the ſame Spirit with themſelves, and their good Opinion of them, is not Charity, but Self-love and *Faction*. Highwaymen, no doubt, call one another honeſt Fellows, as frequently and habitually as other Men do; whereas

whereas their Honeſty is no other than a wicked Fidelity to a Neſt and Confederacy of Rogues, and they are only honeſt to their Fellow-Thieves. But true Honeſty is the ſame to all Men, and to all Men alike.

THE like may be ſaid of Charity; it is tried and exerciſed upon thoſe who are of a Perſuaſion different from ours. But to flatter and be complaiſant to thoſe of the ſame Imaginations, or the ſame Craft with ourſelves, merely becauſe they are of the ſame Craft, is ſuch a new-fangled Charity, as would beat the old *Chriſtian Charity* of St. *Paul* quite out of the World. And yet that this is the true Cauſe, and the true State, of modern Orthodox Charity, appears abundantly from hence, that the moſt wicked good Churchman has more Compliment paid him, and more Favour ſhewn him, than the moſt righteous, moſt godly Diſſenter. Nay, by the ſervile Court paid by many, very many, to thoſe of their Patrons, who lived Libertines,

and died Atheiſts; and by their barbarous Uſage of peaceable, religious Diſſenters, (blameable only for being Diſſenters) it would ſeem as if Virtue were no longer the Object of their Affection, nor Vice of their Averſion.

FOR God's ſake, Gentlemen, abandon this damning Spirit, which is a Contradiction to Religion, and a Reproach to Humanity; aſſume Charity for all Men, or drop all Pretenſions to Chriſtianity; learn to be temperate and well-bred, or ceaſe claiming to be Gentlemen: Leave reviling, as you would be thought Preachers and Exhorters; and, as you would be thought Succeſſors to the Apoſtles, concern not yourſelves with worldly Power, of which the Apoſtles had none.

YOU would not ſure be thought a Set of Eccleſiaſtics, detached both from *Chriſtians* and *Heathens*; and yet, by contending not only for worldly Power, but for independent worldly Power, ſuperior to all the Powers of the World, you ſhew,

as

as many of you as do ſo, that you are a Diſcredit to Chriſtians, and yet are worſe than Heathens. It was the good Counſel of Biſhop *Hall* to *Laud*, who was confounding all Things Human and Divine, that he would be *either Fiſh or Fleſh*; *either throw away his Wings, or pull out his Claws.* For God's ſake, Gentlemen, tell us what Religion you are of —— I mean ſuch of you as aſſert the Poſitions above quoted. To what Claſs of Religion, think you, theſe Men belong? To none, certainly, that ever was in the World. They cannot even make conſiſtent Papiſts, tho' That ſeems to be their higheſt Ambition. Their Popery, I own, is true Popery, and yet it is Popery without a *Pope.* I cannot ſpeak ſo favourably of the Chriſtianity which they pretend to; though That too is Chriſtianity without Chriſt, who was all Meekneſs, Humility, and Love; Omnipotent, but diſclaimed all Power; Infallible, and yet would judge no Man — Are you, Gentlemen,

his

his Succeſſors? Do your Champions reſemble this Picture? They are poor, frail, erring, mortal Men; and yet they would act as if they were omnipotent, and dictate as if they were infallible. Good God! Gentlemen, what Madneſs, to deal thus with us, before they had burnt our Bibles, or put out our Eyes!

Do we not ſee Clergymen actuated by as ſavage and unreaſonable Paſſions as any Set of Men living? And would you pretend to govern abſolutely thoſe who have at leaſt as much Virtue, Senſe, and Sobriety as yourſelves; who, as it is plain from your Lives, cannot govern yourſelves better than others? Have we not ſeen their Heads as deep in wicked Counſel, and their Hands as deep in Crimes, as the Heads and Hands of any Society of Men upon Earth? And can you expect, that we will truſt the moſt important Care in the World, the Care of our Souls, to Men who take no Care of their own; or rather do not ſeem to think, that they have

have any? What Opinion, think you, can we have of their Power with Heaven, when we behold them inceſſantly contending for, and purſuing Power upon Earth, which is inconſiſtent with the Ways of Heaven? It is time, high time, Gentlemen, to give over, and to remember, that we neither want Eyes nor Memory.

THERE has been a long and almoſt general Charge againſt the Clergy of all Ages and Countries, for neglecting to preach and enforce, as much and as clearly as they ought, the great Doctrine of Morality, the beſt Mark of Religion, and the beſt Stay of Human Society: It is indeed Religion itſelf; and that Religion which does not produce Morality, deſerves another Name. Morality is the only Religion which Human Society, conſidered as ſuch, has any Occaſion to ſee practiſed. If a Man be really Moral, neither the Civil Magiſtrate, nor his Fellow-Citizens, ought to have any Concern what he believes, or how he believes.

Our

Our Actions are in our Power, but our Thoughts are not, no more than our Dreams. Belief neceſſarily follows Evidence, and where the Evidence does not appear ſufficient, a Man cannot believe it he would. There was Virtue in the World before there was *Orthodoxy* in it; which hard, equivocal, prieſtly Word, has done more Miſchief to Mankind, than all the Tyrants that ever plagued the Earth. This is worthy the Conſideration of the Laity. Yes, Gentlemen, *Orthodoxy* has made many Tyrants, and exceeded All. What can be ſaid to this *Fact?*

I ALLOW that Prieſts often contend for good Works; but, without a Paradox, the good Works which they contend for, are, for the moſt part, not only not Morality; but, on the contrary, are often very wicked and ſinful. The Endowing of Churches and Monaſteries, is, for Example, with them, a great good Work; and yet it has generally proved a miſchievous Liberality, which evidently hurt Religion

ligion and Human Society, and frequently deſtroyed both. I call upon you, Gentlemen, to ſhew where and when the Chriſtian Religion ever thrived or gained by Riches. I, on my Side, can ſhew that they have been always Poiſon to it. Riches firſt made Prieſts rampant, and ſuch Prieſts ſoon defaced and ruined Religion; but more or leſs effectually, as their Revenues and Power were greater or ſmaller. Chriſtianity flouriſhed moſt, when it had neither worldly Prieſts, nor worldly Endowments. Will you deny this? In ſhort, their preaching good Works has been generally preaching Themſelves, who were the chief Gainers by them. And as to thoſe good Works which did not promiſe any Advantage to the Clergy, they either always oppoſed them, or never encouraged them. We cannot forget your Behaviour at the Beginning of our preſent Charity-Schools, how you every-where oppoſed them, till you had got the Management of them into your own Hands; and

now you as violently promote them out of other Mens Pockets. Whether your Government of thoſe Schools promotes the Welfare of the Commonwealth, (if you can bear that Word) appears abundantly from the bitter and diſaffected Spirit found in them.

BY *Morality*, therefore, is meant a Thing quite different from ſuch *good Works*. Morality is Natural Religion, which prompts us to do Good to all Men, and to all Men alike, without regard to their Speculations, any more than to their Cloaths, or to the Colour of their Hair; which is as much in their Power as their Faith is. Morality is ſocial Virtue, or rather the Mother of all ſocial Virtues: It wiſhes and promotes unlimited and univerſal Happineſs to the whole World: It regards not a *Chriſtian* more than a *Jew* or an *Indian*, any further than as he is a better Citizen; and not ſo much, if he be not.

BARBEYRAC, in his excellent Preface to his Tranſlation of *Puffendorf de Jure Nature*

Naturæ & Genium, has ſhewn us, by a fine Detail of Paſſages, how the *Pagan*, the *Jewiſh*, and too many *Chriſtian* Prieſts, have all ever agreed in concealing, diſguiſing, mangling, calumniating, and oppoſing the eternal Principles of *Morality*, or *Natural Religion*. The Religion of theſe holy Hirelings conſiſted either in a long Rout of Ceremonies, as tedious as ridiculous; or in certain abſtruſe Points, which could never be known, and were not worth knowing; always in great Pomp and Pride; and in Dominion, where-ever they could get it. It was either a Religion of the Body, or a Religion of the Imagination, or a Religion of Shew, Profit and Terror. In fine, the bleſſed Clubs of Eccleſiaſtics of all Religions, in whatever elſe they differed, yet always accorded in this, that the Religion which they contrived, agreed neither with Heaven nor Earth, neither with Reaſon nor Good-humour, but only fitted themſelves, and their own Views.

MR.

MR. BARBEYRAC, in his Preface, has given us a diverting Specimen of the Abſurdities and Ravings of thoſe Reverend old Gentlemen, whom we call the *Fathers*. And in all the Inſtances that he brings, it is hard, if not impoſſible, to ſay, whether the Uncharitableneſs, Roguery, or Stupidity of theſe old Saints, appears uppermoſt.

THIS Preface is every way ſo excellent, that I have prevailed upon a Friend of mine, a Gentleman of *Gray's-Inn*, to tranſlate it into *Engliſh*, for the Inſtruction of the Laity. A Reverend Divine or two have tranſlated the Book itſelf; but no Divine has yet thought fit to give us the Preface. My Countrymen may therefore ſoon expect it from him, with an Introduction.

GENTLEMEN, I have but two Queſtions to ask of you, and I have done: Pray, to what is it owing, that the uſual Spirit and Zeal of this Nation againſt Popery are now quite extinct; inſomuch that in the Neighbourhood of great

Popiſh

Popiſh Families, your Flocks grow daily thinner, and the Maſs-houſes ſtronger; as I am able to ſhew in ſome Inſtances? And, Secondly, What is become of the Bundle of Papers ſent by Mr. *Leſley* to a former Convocation, containing a Project for an Union between the Proteſtant Church of *England* and the Popiſh Church of *France?* And I deſire you will acquaint the World with the Reaſons, why no Notice or Cenſure was paſſed upon them.

I SHALL ſay nothing here of the uſual way taken to anſwer Antagoniſts, not by Reaſon, or Scripture, but by downright Force, Hardſhips and Oppreſſion. The Sermon, called, *The Craftſmen*, has done this to my Hand, and I have now added it to this Edition; I therefore haſte to conclude, and G.

I am, GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt Humble, and

Moſt Obedient Servant,

THE INDEPENDENT WHIG.

TO THE PUBLISHER OF THE INDEPENDENT WHIG.

SIR,

I HAVE been informed, that you are now preparing a Fifth Edition of the *Independent Whig*. I reflect with much Pleaſure on the great and laſting Eſteem which theſe Papers have deſervedly gained. Far from being written with the Spirit of Party, far from being ever deſigned to promote the low and mean Purſuits of private Paſſion, they have long out-lived the Date of Party-writings: And as the candid Spirit which produced them, was *above* ſuch ungenerous Contentions, ſo will they live *beyond* them. They will live to a Day when the very Names of Parties ſhall hardly be remembred, when the Feuds and Conteſts of thoſe Times in

in which they were produced, ſhall no longer engage the Attention of Men; when Ambition is laid low; when Diviſions are laid aſide, and even Defamation is ſilent. Whilſt the Love of Truth and Liberty ſhall prevail in the World, this Collection ſhall be preſerved as ſacred to the Intereſts of both; as their noble Foundation is eternal Truth and good Senſe, as their only End is the Preſervation of that common Good which every Man is born to enjoy in Right of his Creation, and which he ought always to enjoy againſt the exorbitant Claims of ſuperſtitious Prieſts, the vile Arts which they practiſe to deceive, and the Power which they uſurp to oppreſs.

THIS then is the Cauſe of Liberty and Reaſon, a Cauſe which itſelf requires, and whoſe Friends can wiſh it no better Advantage than to be ſeen and tried in open Day. This is moſt worthy of Conqueſt and Triumph. It fights to ſave, and it conquers to deliver. Slavery flies its Approach, and Liberty attends its Victories. This likewiſe is that Cauſe which is ſure of Succeſs, where the wicked and corrupt Agents of dark Iniquity cannot blind the People with myſterious Deluſion, nor put out their Eyes by the Authority of Laws. Againſt theſe impudent Pretenſions, and unwarrantable Practices, fatally common to all Ages and Nations, where-ever Ambition

bition inſpires the Love of Power, or wherever Avarice incites the Luſt of Rapine, have the *Authors of this Collection* appeared with ſo great Reputation and Succeſs, that I know not which is the cleareſt Evidence of their Merit, the Number and Diſtinction of their Friends, or the Outrage of their Enemies.

INDEED the Rage of Nonſenſe is too feeble to ſupport itſelf. Even the Cauſe that gives it Fury, cannot give it Life; it raves, and dies. The moſt flaming Stupidity that ever appeared in Defiance of common Senſe, how much ſoever it might ſerve to fire ignorant Multitudes for a preſent Hour, loſt all its Force, and Credit, and Effect, in the next; loſt even the Applauſe of thoſe whoſe Intereſts had Service from it. The moſt elaborate and well-written Piece of Nonſenſe is but the Being of a Day: If happily timed, it hath its Admirers; when the Seaſon is paſt, it wants even Readers. The very Memory of it can have no Exiſtence, unleſs a Work of Senſe and Meaning give it Life by taking notice of it, and Poſterity read it bound up with thoſe Writings, which it was meant to depreſs and diſcredit. What a Secret would it be with Men, that *Filmer* ever wrote, or that *Sacheverel* ever preached, if the Honourable ALGERNON SIDNEY and Mr. LOCKE had not anſwered one, and if the *Houſe of Commons* had

not impeached the other? How rarely do
ever meet with the former, but in the imm
tal Works of his great Adverſaries? And h
ſeldom do we find the other, but in the Acco
of his Trial?

THE Zeal which I have for the Papers c
tained in thoſe Volumes now under your C
makes me fond even of ſome of the moſt
ſerable Nonſenſe that ever was publiſhed aga
them; and though I have reaſon to believe,
ſuch raving Folly will meet with few Admi
methinks it ought not to be deſtitute of Read
To ſuppreſs it, would be an Honour whic
very ill deſerves. It would thereby ſhare
Fate of the moſt deſerving Writings. T
would be treating the moſt impotent Nonſ
as if it was Senſe and Integrity. Such C
derations induce me to think, that we ough
to treat with Neglect the doughty Perform
of the *Biſhop* of SODOR *and* MANN, o
Bull which he publiſhed againſt the *Indepe*
Whig. The Biſhop is a Gentleman of ſom
gure; the Nonſenſe of the *Bull* is equally
ſpicuous: In ſhort, it is Dulneſs *epiſcopally*
nent. And though a Perſon, even of his
racter, ſhould not have Credit enough to
ſuch a Performance alive; yet the *Indepe*
Whig may preſerve it, and ought to pre
it. The Authors of that uſeful Book owe

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Regard to the Prelate, and, in Return for ſo much Zeal ſhewn by him in ſuppreſſing their Writings, ought with all poſſible Care to perpetuate his. It will do him exemplary Juſtice; it will give Mankind the cleareſt Proofs of his Wiſdom, and of his Integrity, when they ſhall read and compare what this Prelate deſired to burn, and what he recorded to preſerve. The Motive which engaged his Zeal againſt our Authors, the earneſt Deſire, that their Papers ſhould not be read, could never have a place in their Thoughts, whenever they reflected on him. It was, I dare ſay, their hearty Deſire, that he ſhould always have Readers. So little Reaſon had this Reverend Perſon to charge them with Infidelity, ſince this their Diſpoſition, with relation to himſelf, ſhewed that truly *Chriſtian* Principle ſtrongly implanted in them, of doing as they would be done by, how little ſoever of that Doctrine appeared in the Actions of their Oppoſers.

WHEN the *Independent Whig* came into the Dioceſe of *Mann*, the Biſhop immediately iſſued an Act againſt it, which was conceived in the following Terms, and is properly intituled his BULL againſt the *Independent Whig*.

Lib. Causarum per Ann. Dom. 1721.

MY BRETHREN,

WHEREAS a most pestilent Book, [illegible]tuled, The Independent Whig, *has [illegible] lately brought into this Diocese, and, as we [illegible] certainly informed, industriously handed ab[illegible] with a manifest Intent to beguile ignorant [illegible] unstable Souls, and to render the Doctr[illegible] Discipline, and the Government of the Chu[illegible] contemptible; and this without any Regard [illegible] his Majesty's Directions, sent to me by his G[illegible] our Metropolitan, and communicated unto [illegible] expresly condemning such vile Books, and [illegible] spreading of them: I think it my Duty to [illegible] quaint you therewith, and with some of [illegible] baneful Contents thereof, that you may be [illegible] your Guard, and that we may endeavour [illegible] secure the Flock over which the Holy Ghost [illegible] made us Overseers, from the Mischief into [illegible] by this and such-like blasphemous Books, [illegible] God, either for our Punishment or Trial, [illegible] suffered to be sent amongst us.*

THAT the great Design of the Book ab[illegible] mentioned is to undermine the Christian Reli[illegible] appears by the Author's representing all Re[illegible] as a mere Contrivance of Ecclesiastics for [illegible] own Interests;

BY his Rage and Malice againſt the antient Creeds, even that called The Apoſtles *not excepted, and by his treating all ſuch as at any time have* contended for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, *as the Tools of Princes, and as the Peſt of Mankind;*

BY ridiculing the venerable Fathers and Councils of the Primitive Church after the moſt ſcandalous Manner, and thereby depriving, as much as it is in the Power of Hell to do it, the Church of Chriſt of their Teſtimony to the Truth, and of the then received Senſe of the ſacred Scriptures;

BY making a very Jeſt of the Ordinances of the Goſpel, and proſtituting the Sacraments ordained by Chriſt himſelf to Contempt, magnifying thoſe Heretics who do avowedly reject them;

BY making the Peace of the Church the Bane of Society; and Unity amongſt Chriſtians, ſo much required by Jeſus Chriſt, the very Cauſe and Badge of Slavery;

BY ſcoffing at Holy Orders, and making a blaſphemous Compariſon betwixt the Powers conveyed by the Apoſtles to their Succeſſors, and thoſe given by an Attorney-general. And that we may be aſſured, that all this is from the Spirit of Antichriſt, which St. John *ſaith ſhould come into the World, the Author of this*

Book makes the Want of Faith an indiffer
Matter, and expreſly ſaith, that no Man
be rewarded or puniſhed for having or not hav
right or wrong Conceptions of the Incarnati
that is, concerning Jeſus Chriſt being come in
Fleſh, which the Apoſtle gives as the very M
of Antichriſt. In ſhort, the whole Book is
continued Deſign, in which the Devil and
Authors have ſhewed the utmoſt Skill to
waſte the Church of Chriſt, to overthrow
revealed Religion, to reduce Men to a Stat
Nature, and to bring all Things into a
fuſion, both Sacred and Civil.

LEST therefore we ſhould provoke Go
deprive this Church and Nation of the Bleſ
of Truth, and Peace, and Unity, and the M
of Grace which we have ſo long enjoyed,
ſeeming to ſleep while the Enemy is ſo buſy in ſ
ing Tares, and by neglecting to make uſe of
Means becoming the Spirit of the Goſpel, to
der ſuch vile Tenets from ſpreading, to the
nifeſt Danger both of Church and State; I
ſeech you, my Brethren, to join with me in
ing a Stop, if poſſible, to the Beginnings of
faneneſs and Infidelity;

BY convincing our People, from the Wor
God, of the Neceſſity of holding faſt the
ſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience; tha
believing well, as well as living well; not

ing, like Children, carried away with every Blaſt of vain Doctrine; and of the prodigious Sin of thoſe that teach, countenance, or embrace any thing contrary to the Goſpel we have received. The Apoſtle ſaith, and repeats it, Let ſuch be *Anathema,* let them be accurſed.

BY detecting the Agents and Abettors of this Antichriſtian Spirit, that either they may be convinced of their Error in the Spirit of Meekneſs, or cut off from the Body of Chriſt, that they may learn not to blaſpheme.

AND for ourſelves, my Brethren, let us endeavour, by Well-doing, to put to Silence the Ignorance of fooliſh Men, holding faſt the faithful Word, as we have been taught, that we may be able, by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince the Gainſayers.

Given under my Hand this 27th of *January*, in the Year of our Lord 1721, and of our Conſecration the 25th.

THO. SODOR & MANN.

To the Reverend Mr. Woods, *Epiſcopal Regiſter, to be communicated to the Clergy of this Dioceſe,* 30 Januarii 1721.

Copia vera Exa' per me *J. Woods*, R. P. D. Tho. Sodor & Manniæ Epiſ. Regiſtr.

NOT content with theſe thundering Curſe againſt this unfortunate Book, the Biſhop o *Mann*, in the Plenitude of his Apoſtolical Powe conceived himſelf legally commiſſioned to ſeiz it where-ever he found it. Accordingly, whe Mr. *Richard Worthington* ſent it as a Preſent t the Public Library of the Iſland, the Biſho commanded his Creature, one *Stevenſon* o *Ballidoole*, to take it and keep it, ſo that i ſhould neither be depoſited in the Librar nor yet reſtored to the Owner. The Par aggrieved by this lawleſs Procedure had re courſe to the Juſtice of the Governor, who when *Stevenſon* refuſed to reſtore the Book t the right Owner, committed him to *Caſtl Ruſhen*, till he ſhould make Reparation. Upo which Occaſion the *Biſhop of Mann* proteſte againſt his Impriſonment; which Act of th Biſhop, as alſo the Governor's Anſwer, an faithfully ſet forth in the following Words:

To the Honourable Alexander Horne, *Eſq*;
Governor of this Iſle:

The Remonſtrance of Tho. *Bp. of* Sodor & Mann

WHEREAS John Stevenſon, *of* Ball doole, *Eſq*; *is now impriſoned in* Caſtl Ruſhen *for aſſiſting me to ſuppreſs a moſt peſti-*
lent

lent Book, intituled, The Independent Whig; *which Book has been induſtriouſly handed about to the manifeſt Hurt of the Flock committed to my Care: And foraſmuch as I am obliged and required, not only by his Majeſty's late Directions, ſent to me by his Grace our Metropolitan, but alſo by my Conſecration-Vows, to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word: And being convinced, that this Book, ſo full of damnable Errors, (if permitted to be again diſperſed) is capable of doing more Miſchief, than the very Plague we are ſo much juſtly afraid of: And ſince there is no other Method of obtaining Mr.* Stevenſon's *Inlargement, than by delivering up the ſaid Book; I do therefore proteſt againſt the evil Conſequences which may attend the forcing it out of my Hands. And I deſire, that this may be entered upon Record, to the end, that my Obedience to his Majeſty's Commands, and a due Senſe of my Duty, may appear hereafter.*

Dated *Feb.* 21. *Anno Dom.* 1721. and the 25th of our Conſecration.

THO. *SODOR & MANN.*

At *Caſtle Ruſhen*, the 2d of *February* 1721.

THE Concern the Biſhop ſhews for John Stevenſon, *of* Ballidoole, *an Eſquire of his own Creation, is a Recompence he could not well avoid making, ſince he has by ſuch Ways and Means made him an Inſtrument to purſue any thing he ſhall think fit to put him upon.*

BUT it is ſurpriſing to me, to find the Biſhop making the Aſſiſtance Mr. Stevenſon *gave him, to ſuppreſs the Book, intituled,* The Independent Whig, *the Occaſion of his Confinement; when they, and every body elſe that knows the Matter, can tell, that he was confined for refuſing to reſtore that Book that was but lent him, which Mr.* Worthington *deſired might be preſented from him to the Library here; and if Mr.* Stevenſon *would have returned that Book, or a Receipt from the Library-keeper, that he had received it for the Library, as was often told him, it would have prevented his Confinement, and ſaved the Biſhop the Trouble of his elaborate Remonſtrance, ſince a Receipt, which might have been writ in few Words, would have done as well; and when they had it in their Cuſtody, they might have uſed their own Methods to ſuppreſs or prevent its being ſpread abroad.*

BUT

BUT, *perhaps, he had a mind to ſhew his Reſentment of this Book, under the ſpecious Pretence of his Zeal and Obedience to his Majeſty's Commands; but if he had thought fit to have uſed the Prayers that were compoſed in the Time of the Rebellion, which were ordered by his Majeſty to be made uſe of in all Churches and Chapels,* &c. *it might have been a greater Inſtance of Affection, Zeal and Obedience to his Majeſty and Government, than what he has done by cenſuring and condemning this Book; which I cannot find has been condemned in* England, *or thought to be one of the Books comprehended in his Majeſty's late Order.*

BUT *though the Prayers above-mentioned were then delivered to the Biſhop, in order to be uſed in the Churches and Chapels here, and that he (the Biſhop) promiſed they ſhould, yet I did not find that they were; nor do I now ſo much wonder at it, when I find, that rather than the Clergy will ſubſcribe a Declaration, teſtifying their Affection to his Majeſty and Government, and his Right to the Crown of* Great Britain, &c. *as eſtabliſhed by ſeveral Acts of Parliament, and againſt all Pretenders, they will content themſelves with ſupplying the Cure of ſome Pariſhes now vacant, upon Courteſy, rather than apply to the Right Honour-*

able Lord and Patron of this Iſle for a Preſen-tation, upon theſe Terms.

AND ſince the Biſhop has ſo earneſtly de-ſired this his Remonſtrance *to be recorded, h has given me an Opportunity of making thes Remarks, and alſo of juſtifying my Deſire o having the Prayers above-mentioned uſed i this Iſland, and leaves me leſs liable to th Reflections that might be made, for not uſin them.*

ALEX. HORNE.

IT is alſo proper to annex the Certificate o thoſe who tendered the Book, by the Gover nor's Command, to another of the Biſhop Creatures, the Library-keeper of the Iſland.

We do hereby certify, that being this Da ſent by the Honourable Governor with a Book intituled, The Independent Whig, *to be give to Mr.* Roſs, *Library-keeper in this Iſland, a a Preſent from Mr.* Richard Worthington, *fo the Uſe of the Library; We accordingly ten dered the ſaid Book to the aforeſaid Mr.* Roſs, *but he poſitively refuſed to accept the ſam ſaying, he had read it, and that it was th vileſt Book he ever ſaw; and, with ſolemn Re petitions, declared, he would as ſoon take Poiſon*

to receive the Book into the Library upon any other Terms, than immediately to burn it.

Witneſs *our Hands, this 21ſt of* February 1721-2.

J. ROWE.
JOHN QUALE.

THIS *Bull*, and the ſubſequent Proceedings, (as they have been faithfully extracted from the Regiſters of the Dioceſe, and from the public Records of the *Iſle of Mann*) give us a notable Inſtance of that virtuous and godly Spirit which appeared with ſuch primitive Zeal againſt the *Independent Whig*. And when Mankind ſhall remember by no other Means, what a meek and Chriſtian Prelate governed that Iſland in our Generation, theſe precious Memorials will exhibit in ſo lively a manner his Candour and Learning, his great good Senſe and Humanity, his Charity and Piety, that I know not to which they will do the greateſt Service, his own Reputation, or that Religion which he pretended to ſerve, and which it was his Duty to ſupport, not to the Ends of prieſtly and worldly Ambition, but to the great and beneficent End of its divine Inſtitution; not by the Means of Authority and Perſecution, which it was inſtituted profeſſedly in Oppoſition to, and which the very Genius of it abhors, as every Precept of it condemns

demns them; but it was his Duty to ſuppor it, as his Lord and Maſter diſpenſed it, by the Force of Argument, and by the Influence o Perſuaſion, by exemplary Meekneſs, Patience and Charity, which are the Spirit of the Goſpe and the Eſſentials of true Religion.

INSTEAD of this, you have ſeen, that th *Biſhop of Mann*, having taken Offence at a Boo which was wrote in Oppoſition to the Claim and Conduct of *Popiſh* and *Popiſhly affecte* Clergymen, firſt brands it with an infamous an odious Deſign of beguiling the Souls of Men and then calls in the Aid of the Secular Arm t ſecond his defamatory Cenſure, by pretendin that his Majeſty's Directions had condemne this Book, *even before it was wrote*; and ha impowered him to ſuppreſs it as a blaſphemou Book, without any legal Trial, againſt the Law of the Realm, and againſt the Rights of th People.

TO colour this unjuſt and moſt diſhonei Attempt, the *Biſhop of Mann* thought fit t charge it, in the moſt avowed and licentiou Manner, againſt the Authors of this Book, tha their great Deſign therein was to undermine th *Chriſtian* Religion; and, in Proof of this bol Detraction, he ſays, that it appears from thei having repreſented *all Religion as a mere Contrivance of Eccleſiaſtics for their own Intereſt.*

THI

THIS is a Calumny ſupported by a Falſhood, a Scandal maintained by groſs Miſrepreſentation. The Authors of the *Independent Whig* had no-where ſaid, had no-where ſuggeſted, that all Religion was a mere Contrivance of Eccleſiaſtics for their own Intereſts. On the contrary, they repreſented true Religion as the moſt uſeful, the moſt amiable and excellent Thing in the World; far from being contrived by Prieſts, but altogether founded in Reaſon, diſpenſed by the All-wiſe God, and perfectly agreeable to his divine Goodneſs. If any Religion, or any public Eſtabliſhments, have at any time been contrived or modelled by Eccleſiaſtics, merely for their own Intereſts, could it be a Crime in theſe Authors to repreſent them, as they are, hateful to God, and injurious to Men? Are there indeed no ſuch Inſtitutions, no ſuch pretended Religions upon Earth? Can the Biſhop of *Mann* himſelf venture to ſay, that there is any eſtabliſhed Religion in the World (beyond the Pale of the *Proteſtant* Churches) which is not almoſt wholly the mere Contrivance of Eccleſiaſtics for their own Intereſt? And is it not the Duty of all who profeſs, of all who love, or would ſerve, that Religion which hath Truth and Purity on its Side, to deſtroy, as far as they are able, the falſe, the corrupt and knaviſh Inſtitutions, which ſo much abound in other

other Countries, and from which our own ha not always been free?

BUT for the *Chriſtian* Religion, which t Biſhop undoubtedly includes in that compr henſive Term of *all Religion*, can there be mo glaring Falſhood or Folly, than to charge t Authors of the *Independent Whig*, that they u dermine this Holy Religion, by repreſenting A Religions as the mere *Contrivance* of Eccl ſiaſtics for their own Intereſts, when, throu the whole Tenour of the Book, almoſt in eve Paper, it is undeniably proved, that the Inte eſts of ſelfiſh Eccleſiaſtics are utterly irreco cilable, and even deſtructive, to the Chriſti Religion; proved, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was t greateſt Enemy which they, or their Cont vances, ever met with; that his Goſpel ſtill r mains, as formidable as himſelf was, againſt their Schemes of Ambition and Avarice? A could the Authors of this Collection, by i veighing againſt falſe Religion, as the Cont vance of Eccleſiaſtics for their own Intereſt repreſent Eccleſiaſtics as contriving that R ligion for their Intereſts, which is utterly opp ſite to all their Intereſts? Could they repreſe Chriſtianity as an Eccleſiaſtical Contrivanc when the Divine Founder of it, both by h Example and Arguments, contributed more t the Downfal of ſuch Contrivances, than all th

Lawgiver

Lawgivers, than all the Prophets, from the Creation to his own Times had done; and when this divine Example, theſe invincible Arguments, were the Authorities continually made uſe of in the *Independent Whig* againſt ungodly Eccleſiaſtical Intereſts, which are every-where in the Book treated and condemned as unchriſtian Contrivances?

So little Truth, ſo little Candour and Conſiſtency, was found in the Biſhop, when he *defamed* the Authors as Underminers of the *Chriſtian* Religion. And ſorry I am to ſay it, but from his Behaviour in this Inſtance, the Reaſonings made uſe of in theſe Papers too fatally appear to be true; ſince here is a Biſhop, whom neither the Impoſition of Hands, nor his receiving the Holy Ghoſt, could inſpire with Truth, or Temper, or Candour, or Patience; and ſince, notwithſtanding that ſolemn *Ceremony*, that ſacred *Fiat*, he ſeems as prone to Slander and Falſhood, as the moſt *unconſecrated* Layman.

NOR is the following Paragraph, in this *ſpiritual* Libel, better ſupported with Truth, or leſs chargeable with Defamation; I mean that Rage and Malice which he pretends to be in the *Independent Whig* againſt the antient Creeds, even that called the Apoſtles not excepted, as if they had treated all ſuch as have at any time contended

contended for the Faith, as the Tools of Princes and as the Peſt of Mankind.

FOR the Authors of theſe Papers have not, as I know of, objected to any ſuch Creeds, or treated them with Rage and Malice. But if they treated them as no Part of Holy Writ, as no Divine Inſtitutions, as Syſtems and Forms compoſed by Men, and free for Mankind to receive or reject, ſo far they had Truth and Evidence on their Side. If they further ſhewed That no Creed or Compoſition of Belief, no Syſtem of Faith, can compel the Aſſent, when it does not convince the Underſtanding; that it is Blaſphemy againſt God, and Tyranny over Men, to command us in his Name to believe that which it is impoſſible to believe, or to damn by his Authority, all thoſe who cannot comprehend that which is commanded in his Name. If they ſhewed, from the Juſtice and Equity of the Supreme Being, from the neceſſary and unalterable Goodneſs of his Almighty Will, that no Man could be ungracious in his Sight by making uſe of his Reaſon in the higheſt Concerns of Religion, or by differing from others in that which only related to himſelf, or by disbelieving Creeds, if he could not poſſibly believe them, or by not underſtanding that which to him appeared unintelligible: If they

ſhewed

ſhewed, that it was contrary to Reaſon, to Humanity, and to true Religion, to diſtreſs and to haraſs any Man for Opinions which could neither injure his Neighbour, nor offend his God, for Convictions of Mind which were irreſiſtible to himſelf, and uncontroulable by others: If they ſhewed, that no Form of Words, nor any Antiquity of Creeds, nor even that which ſome are pleaſed to call the *Apoſtles Creed*, could alter the Nature of Right or Wrong, of Juſt or Unjuſt; but that, however true or certain they might be in themſelves, yet thoſe who conceived them otherwiſe through unavoidable Apprehenſions, ought no more to be puniſhed in this World, or damned in the next, than for disbelieving any other Propoſition, or authoritative Opinion, which, however demonſtrative in its Nature, or however ſupported by Evidence, by the Belief of Multitudes, or by Rewards annexed to it, cannot poſſibly appear equally true to all Men, nor will ever be univerſally agreed on by them: If this was the Reaſoning of the *Independent Whig*, was this what the Biſhop calls Rage and Malice againſt the antient Creeds? Or, though his clear Underſtanding is capable of receiving *all the* three *Creeds together*, as unerring Standards of Faith; yet is it any Affront, and Indecency to thoſe Creeds, or any Miſdemeanour againſt them,

them, if any other Perſon in the World ſhoul be not altogether ſo clear in Opinion as thi intelligent Prelate?

SUPPOSE that any Man ſhould be ſo un orthodox as to differ from the damning Clauſe of the *Athanaſian* Creed, muſt he be damne himſelf for not conſigning other Men to Dam nation? And though the tender Mercies of th *Biſhop of Mann* ſhould ſend poor Mortals quic to Hell, in conſequence of that extraordinar Syſtem; does it ſhow from Rage and Malic againſt the antient Creeds to ſay, that the juſt the good, and beneficent Author of the Uni verſe created Men for other Ends; and what ever their Opinions may be in Matters which they judge differently of, and cannot all agree in, that ſtill this merciful Being will finally ſend them to a milder Place, and provide them better Company? Does this then undermine the *Chriſtian* Religion, or does not the con trary Doctrine more undermine it, more blaſ pheme it, than all the Attempts of its Enemie collected together?

WHO then is the bittereſt and moſt im placable Adverſary to the *Chriſtian* Religion the Authors of the *Independent Whig*, who vin dicate Almighty God, and his Revelations, from the abſurd, the inhuman and cruel Purpoſe imputed to them; or the *Biſhop of Mann*, who

loadi

loads them with all theſe monſtrous and merciless Imputations, making that to be a *blaſphemous* Book, which proves the Deity to be good and juſt; and that to undermine the *Chriſtian* Religion, which maintains its Goſpel to be as meek and as pure, as beneficent and charitable, as the Perſon who firſt preached it? If I were not an utter an Enemy to all Kinds of Power and Perſecution in Matters of Opinion, I could put the Laws againſt Blaſphemy and Profaneneſs in Force againſt this violent Prelate, who ſeems to be even guilty of a greater Crime than that of denying the Being of a God; for he denies his great and eſſential *Attributes*, thoſe of his Mercy and Goodneſs, and aſcribes to the Deity a wicked and abominable Nature, making the Aſſertion of God's univerſal Benevolence to undermine the *Chriſtian* Religion. But though I am againſt the Penal Laws, yet I expect, that whilſt the *Biſhop of Man* hopes for Toleration in his ſtrange Notions, which ſeem to make the Almighty a wicked and arbitrary Being, and the Religion of *Jeſus* more inhuman than that of *Moloch*; I ſay, whilſt he is tolerated in theſe wild Opinions, I hope that he will not too rigorouſly inſiſt, that the Laws be put in Execution againſt thoſe who believe, that God is not a Tyrant, nor the *Chriſtian* Religion a Plague.

To

To me the *Biſhop of Mann* appears to ſee, and indeed to repreſent, God and Religion in a monſtrous and terrible Light; ſince he makes it a Mark of Antichriſt, to ſuppoſe that there can be no Sin in not conceiving rightly of Things which cannot be conceived at all. A Myſtery is no longer one, when it is underſtood; and whilſt it cannot be poſſibly underſtood by the dark and limited Capacities of Men, how can an Impoſſibility become their Crime? Does God require Impoſſibilities as Acts of Duty? Who dare ſay this? How then can right or wrong Notions of Matters, which are above all Notion, be intitled to Rewards or Puniſhments? Had they been neceſſary to have been underſtood, he who is the Author of them, and who only can explain them, would have explained them. Whatever is utterly without our Reach, can never be Part of our Duty; and whatever is not matter of Duty, is matter of Indifference. This is the Doctrine which the Biſhop brands as coming from Antichriſt; and by doing ſo, ſhews no Chriſtian Spirit.

To damn Men for inevitable Miſapprehenſions, as it can never be of God, nor of his Son, who loved Men ſo well as to die for them, ſavours indeed of the Spirit of Antichriſt; which Spirit the Biſhop, with notable Confidence and Abſurdity, imputes to the *Independent Whigs*

Whig, a Book which every-where endeavours to infuſe rational and amiable Ideas of God and his beloved Son. That the good God, who created us, and knows our Weakneſs, ſhould ſubject us to everlaſting Wrath for the involuntary Motions of our frail Minds; is a Principle full of Horror, and repugnant to the Character of the Divine Being; but has ever been the genuine Characteriſtic of bold Deceivers, who ſet themſelves up in his ſtead, and claim a Commiſſion to do every thing that is unlike him, every thing that is unworthy of him, but every thing, however hideous and wicked, that tends to aggrandize themſelves, and to cheat or deſtroy the reſt of the Creation.

THIS Reaſoning, which is eternally true, and too well ſupported with Facts, the *Independent Whig* ſtrongly inculcates. Does the Biſhop anſwer it? No; he rages, miſrepreſents, and calls Names.

BEFORE the Miſſion of *Jeſus Chriſt*, Mankind are not pretended to have been under other Hazards of Damnation, than what they were liable to through the imputed Guilt of their great Progenitor, and through the perſonal Guilt of diſpleaſing God by unjuſt or unreaſonable Actions. The Miſſion of *Jeſus*, that Bleſſing to Mankind, foretold by the Prophecies of Ages, and uſhered in by the Pomp of Angels,

gels, was to make the Means of Salvation, and of pleaſing God, more intelligible, and more eaſy. Now if *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Son whom he ſent from his Boſom, had, according to the unhallowed Notions of the *Biſhop of Mann*, diſpenſed a difficult and unintelligible Rule of Salvation, he had left the Souls of Men in a much more dangerous and precarious Situation than he found them; and had not the right or wrong Conceptions of his Incarnation been intended by him as no Matters of Duty, the Means of Damnation had been multiplied, and Hell would have had an Advantage on its Side great in proportion to theſe new Hazards of loſing the Souls of Men: So that were the *Biſhop of Mann*'s wild Inferences true, the Devil would be a Gainer by the Goſpel.

Now, ſince the Biſhop ſeems of Opinion that it is the very Spirit of Antichriſt to deny that Rewards and Puniſhments follow right and wrong Conceptions of Myſteries, even of ſuch Myſteries as cannot be conceived at all, I would ask him to explain his own Notions about ſome of them: How (for Example) the Incarnation of the Deity could be effected without the natural efficient Cauſes; how this Divine Perſon was conceived without the Work of human Generation; how the Virgin his Mother became pregnant without Intercourſe with Man

how

how the Holy Ghoſt operated upon that *Bleſſed Woman*, or how the *Overſhadowing* influenced her Conception? For theſe are ſuch abſtruſe Speculations, that I ſhould not think it concerned any Man alive in Reaſon, or Conſcience, or from Duty to God or himſelf, to inquire how theſe prodigious Acts of Divine Power were formed, notwithſtanding the Biſhop makes it antichriſtian to treat theſe Matters as no Parts of Duty, or, as he calls it, as indifferent Matters.

IF the *Biſhop of Mann* then means, that certain fond and inexplicable Speculations of his own, are the Faith once delivered to the Saints, well might the Authors of the *Independent Whig* repreſent ſuch Hypocrites, who have at any time contended for it, as the Tools of Princes, and as the Peſt of Mankind; ſince Tyranny never had ſuch Chains for the Minds of Men, as the Fears of Superſtition; ſince Tyrants never had ſuch Inſtruments of Oppreſſion, as holy Knaves, and believing Fools; nor Armies nor Battles have laid waſte the Creation in any Proportion to Religious Maſſacres, and Religious Perſecution: Nor hath Conqueſt by the Sword ever enſlaved Mankind in any degree like Monkiſh Devotion and implicit Belief. But that any of thoſe who have at any time contended for the *Chriſtian* Religion, as it was delivered

by *Chriſt* himſelf; that any of thoſe who h
advanced its pure Morals, and its peace
Doctrines, its beneficent Views, and grac
Diſpenſations, are at all mal-treated in the I
pendent Whig; or that they have not been tre
by the Authors of that Book with the hig
Decency, and with the warmeſt Elogium
defy this railing Prelate, and all his ghoſtly A
tors, to ſhew from any Paſſage in the wh
Collection of their Papers.

INDEED the *Fathers* and *Councils*, whom
is ſaid that theſe Authors have ridiculed, are,
the Biſhop's Leave, as far from being venera
as is his own Spirit and Behaviour in this wi
Affair. It is not long Habits that convey
verence, any more than the Impoſition of H
conveys Holineſs. If they have been ridicu
were they not ſufficiently ridiculous? W
not the Reveries of many of thoſe Father
wild, and falſe, and droll, as his own E
Were not the Deciſions of many of t
Councils as abſurd? Take Nine Parts in
of their Writings and Decrees, you will find,
if they had not been written on the moſt ſa
of all Subjects, the *Chriſtian* Religion, or at
borrowed that amiable Name, they are ſo
fooliſh, ſo incredibly extravagant, that it w
even have been below the Dignity of an Ex
tioner to have burnt them. And is even

moſt ſublime Subject to ſanctify the moſt glaring Stupidity of Hypocrites, or ignorant Visionaries, however cloathed with pompous Names? Or would it not be for the Honour of Truth, and true Religion, that ſuch *Gothic* Transformers of Religion and Truth, ſuch Enemies to common Senſe, had never undertaken to expound the plain and intelligible Precepts of the Goſpel? Precepts which had never been made Matters of ſuch Diſpute, if theſe dreaming and wrangling Dotards had not multiplied gigantic Volumes in confounding Human Underſtanding about them! Is there any thing falſe or abſurd, which hath not Authority from ſome or other of their Writings? Do any two of them agree with one another, or does any one of them agree even with himſelf? How few of them have common Senſe, or Decency, or Dignity of Style? What Teſtimony do they give to the Truth? Or what certain determined Senſe do they receive the Scriptures in? If their Teſtimony was worth any thing, or if their Opinions were of Importance, what a doleful Condition muſt the *Chriſtian* Religion be reduced to, loſt in ſuch a Mountain of illiterate Lumber? And what a more doleful Condition would *Chriſtians* be in, whom the Holy Scriptures could not ſufficiently ſecure in their Salvation without the Aſſiſtance of theſe volumi-

nous, these unintelligible Collections, filled w
idle Rhapsodies, with senseless Commenta
and endless Controversies; all which are o
little additional Weight to the holy inspired Wr
ings, as the elaborate and sublime Nonsens
the *Mahometan* Doctors is of Service to
Reputation of their Impostor's *Alcoran*?

How then will the Bishop make it an
dermining of the Christian Religion, to ridi
a Set of Monks and Pedants, of whom
whose Writings the Truth and the Meanin
this Divine Law is, as it ought to be, un
independent? Or what hath the Power of
to do in depriving the Church of Christ of
Assistance, which it doth not want, and w
indeed they cannot give it any? If he means,
their mountainous Rubbish is the Assist
and the Support of a Craft; that it keeps
Science of Juggle and Jargon; that it mak
Trade of Divinity, and proves the Livelih
of Dunces; I confess, that the Study of Fa
and Councils is worthy of his pious Care.
Christian Religion, I hope and am assured, w
no such wretched Support; but we may b
lowed to attack these rotten Foundation
Fraud and *Priestcraft*, without being treate
Underminers of *Christianity*.

THIS Undermining Work is charged by
Bishop of Mann on the Authors of the
pe

pendent Whig, in a very extraordinary Inſtance; namely, "By making a very Jeſt of the Ordi-"nances of the Goſpel, and proſtituting the Sa-"craments ordained by *Chriſt* himſelf to Con-"tempt, magnifying thoſe *Heretics* who do "avowedly reject them."

THIS is pure Defamation in the Biſhop, who is alſo very unfortunate and unſucceſsful in it, ſince there is not one Ordinance of the Goſpel which theſe Authors jeſt with. They indeed treat the Goſpel, and all its Ordinances, with high Decency and Reſpect. But if he means *bowing to the Eaſt, cringing Poſtures, long Habits, black Gowns, or white Surplices*; ſo far as theſe are ſuppoſed to have any relative Holineſs in them, they are not the Ordinances of the Goſpel; and ſo far as they are pretended to be ſo, they ought always to be made a Jeſt of. But ſuch is the everlaſting Blindneſs of Bigots, and ſuch the Chicanery of intereſted Prieſts: whatever external Forms or Rites are moſt agreeable to their own Gain and Caprice, or moſt proper to dazzle the Croud, and to amuſe the Vulgar, ſuch *Fopperies* are always *Goſpel-ordinances*, and it is Blaſphemy to be in Jeſt on any ſuch ludicrous Subject.

IN this manner it is made a Mark of proſtituting the Sacraments to Contempt, merely because they are treated as not eſſential to Salva-

tion, but as Parts of Religion free to be
penſed with by all who are not ſo ſenſible
their *Soul-ſaving* Importance. But is this
dermining Chriſtianity? Is this, which re
its antient Simplicity, and removes its
modern and arbitrary Additions, to under
it? No, it hath been moſt undermined by
who have taken away the *Morals*, and have
us nothing but the *Myſteries*, *of Chriſtian*
which is like removing a Foundation for
ſake of a Superſtructure; and thus that w
was intended for a Rule of Manners, is
laid aſide for a Syſtem of Faith; and a pe
Scheme of Moral Virtue is turned into a R
of Monkiſh Devotions.

FROM hence it is made Antichriſtian
plead for thoſe who, obſerving quite the
trary Method, have ſhewed more Zeal for
Foundations of Things, and have intirely
aſide ambiguous Myſteries, and vain Ceremo
for the ſake of Morals, and ſolid Piety. He
the QUAKERS are abuſed as *Heretics* by
charitable Biſhop, and to magnify them, i
undermine Chriſtianity.

IT both ſurpriſes and alarms me, that
who pretends to act under Authority, and
appeal to the Royal Directions, ſhould dare
treat thoſe as *Heretics*, whom the ſupreme H
of the Church, and the States of Parliam

have acknowledged as *good Chriſtians*: Inſomuch that their Religion, their Perſuaſion and Opinion is as Orthodox by Law, as the *Biſhop of Man's* can pretend his to be, only with the Difference, on his ſide, of Places and Preferments, and of Men being hired to preach for ſo much Money a Year. The *Quakers*, and our other Diſſenters, are all Orthodox in the Eye of the Government, which might, if it pleaſed, eſtabliſh them as the National Church, from which the Biſhop would then be a Diſſenter, nay, perhaps, deemed Heretical, unleſs he turned Conformiſt to thoſe whom he now brands as Schiſmatics. There is no End of this mutual Imputation of Hereſy; a Charge always denied, and generally returned: To Men of Charity and Senſe the very Sound is ſtale and fooliſh; and it is ſcarce ever any other than the Language of Craft and Bigotry, of Knavery and Folly.

WHERE is the *Hereſy* of not receiving the Sacrament according to the Rites of the Church of *England*, or, which has the ſame Effect, not receiving it at all? I hope, at leaſt, that it is not heretical for Men to deſire no profitable Employments, no Revenues or Endowments to ſupport their Lazineſs and Luxury at the public Charge. Pray which are the moſt uſeful Body of Men, ſuch who live upon the Labour of the People, without doing any Service to Society,

or the *Quakers*, who by their honeſt Indu
maintain themſelves, pay their Proportion
all the Charges of the Commonwealth,
neither have nor deſire any Advantage fr
Power or Favour, but merely common Pro
tion? This is ſo modeſt, ſo reaſonable a Requ
that I may well wonder to hear one of the Or
of Biſhops, Men who riot in *Thouſands per A*
num, not acquired by themſelves, but drai
from the Properties of others, ſtigmatize in
cent and peaceable Men with hard Names
Mob-reproaches, when they deſire no mo
than to enjoy their own, without envying th
who live ſplendidly at other Mens Coſt, thou
perhaps very little to their Profit. I will ve
ture here to call upon this Biſhop, one ſo ve
orthodox and conforming, and ſo very angry
Separatiſts, though he himſelf is a Separatiſt
all other Sects --- I ſay, I call upon this Father
the Church, to diſtinguiſh his Zeal by a cl
and logical Confutation of what the *Independe*
Whig ſays of the Quakers, and of what th
more copious Apologiſt *Robert Barclay* ſays f
them. I call upon him to undertake a ſolem
and general Confutation of the *Independent Wh*
eſpecially about the Power of the Clergy, th
Oaths and Pretenſions, and about the Tendenc
of Prieſtcraft and Superſtition: Elſe it will
juſtly taken for granted, that he rails (and r

in a Corner) at what he cannot anſwer; and ſince, by vapouring at a Diſtance, he has in ſome ſort entered the Liſts, is defied to anſwer.

AFTER this Prelate had in this coarſe and uncharitable manner libelled and defamed a conſiderable Body of Men, protected by the ſame Laws, incorporated under the ſame Conſtitution, and equally uſeful to the Community with the Members of the *Church of England* itſelf, treating them as *Heretics*, branding them with *Mob-reproaches*, and curſing them with his great *Anathema*, as guilty of a prodigious Sin in teaching and embracing Tenets contrary to thoſe Opinions which the Biſhop and his Brethren pretend to be the Meaning of the Goſpel: After this damning and unchriſtian Procedure, he goes on to charge it as a moſt ſhocking Enormity in the Authors of the *Independent Whig*, an Evidence of their great Deſign to undermine the Chriſtian Religion, *that they have treated the* Peace of the Church, *as the* Bane of Society; and Unity among Chriſtians, *ſo much required by* Jeſus Chriſt, *as the very* Cauſe *and* Badge *of Slavery*.

THIS, from the Mouth of the *Biſhop of Mann*, is the moſt extraordinary Charge that could be broached. It is a Confutation of his whoſe Libel, an ample Vindication of the Authors whom he thus defames. For he has through the whole Rhapſody ſhewn us in a lively manner what he

means by the PEACE OF THE CHURCH, even that it is an intire Submiſſion to authoritative Opinions; that it conſiſts in *implicit Belief*, and *unconditional Obedience*, yielded to a Set of Men who, without ever appearing to be wiſer or better, but on the contrary, too frequently weaker and more wicked, than the reſt of the World, have confidently claimed the ſupreme Direction of Mankind, a dictatorial Power over the Underſtandings and the Morals of Men; which Power they have conſtantly employed for the Gratification of their own Ambition and Avarice, groſly deceiving the Underſtandings, ſhamefully corrupting the Morals, of all who have been in Subjection to their Sway, or influenced by their Perſuaſion.

THIS Peace of the Church (if Blindneſs and Vaſſalage can be called Peace) is the Deſolation of the whole World; and preaching this Peace is making War on Mankind. It is drawing the Sword againſt the Rights of Nature and Nations; it is arming a Body of Men with *Damnation*, with the Magazines of *Confuſion* and *Uproar*, which they never fail to hurl about againſt all who think fit to withſtand them. It is a *Prerogative* veſted in them, to ſet all Men at Variance and Strife, marking out thoſe who are weak enough to be blinded and miſguided by them, as Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven,

ſending

ſending others *quick to Hell*, only for being the Subjects of their private Diſlike, or Opponents to their unrighteous and moſt impious Uſurpations. And when theſe arbitrary Diſtinctions of *Hereſy* and *Orthodoxy* have made the World quite drunk with religious Rage; when this Rage, this cruel and wide-waſting Peſtilence, hath deſtroyed all before it; when the Orthodox, armed with Inquiſitions, and ſtrengthened by Maſſacres, have gained the Poſſeſſion of the Earth; and thoſe *pious Eccleſiaſtics*, who led them on to ſlaughter others, bind them down in Chains themſelves; then is the *Church at Peace*; and this *is that Peace*, which the *Independent Whig* hath treated as the *Bane of Society*. God knows, and the World ſadly feels, that it has eternally proved ſo.

CERTAINLY ſuch an Unity among Chriſtians muſt be the very Cauſe and Badge of Slavery; an Unity which is defined and deſcribed by *a Standard of Faith* made to govern even the involuntary Conceptions of all Men, and to require the Aſſent of all to it, whether they at all conceive, underſtand, and believe it, or otherwiſe. To require Unity among Chriſtians in this extravagant manner, to command them all to agree in one or more Opinions, when they were created and conſtituted to differ and diſagree in all Opinions, by the Make of their Bo-

dies and Minds, by the Manner of their Appre-
henſion, and by various Circumſtances form
or educated to ſee Things very differently fro
each other --- I ſay, to require this, would b
ſetting up the *Law of Revelation* againſt th
Law of Creation, would be imputing a wi
and wicked Part to the gracious Author of th
Univerſe, in firſt creating Men to differ unavoi
ably, and then commanding them, on pain
Damnation, to conceive alike. So that, as the
cannot live or breathe in one World witho
Diſagreement of Opinion, neither can they b
ſaved or forgiven in the other, without Agre
ment of Opinion. Againſt the *Powers and Ter*
of Nature, they are required to make the
Terms and Peace with God; and, *born* to V
riety of Opinions, are *commanded* to an Unity o
Opinions. Under which Command no M
can live; and yet by tranſgreſſing that whi
cannot be obeyed, all Men muſt be damned.

Is not this a noble, an illuſtrious Syſtem o
Divinity? Is not this a moſt extraordina
Summary of the *Chriſtian Faith*? Yet this i
the *Biſhop*'s Syſtem; a Syſtem formed by th
vain and fooliſh Pride of Man, in Oppoſitio
to the Spirit and Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt*, a
yet confidently fathered upon him. From th
Imputation the Authors of the *Independent Wh*
defended and cleared the holy Name of *Je*
Chri

Chriſt, wh
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Chriſt, who never commanded ſuch unreaſonable and ſhocking Laws, as would have been the Confutation of every Claim to a divine Miſſion. The Unity which he ſo worthily preached, in his glorious Capacity as Saviour of Mankind, was an *Unity of Affections*, which all Men are infinitely more capable of forming, than *Unity of Opinions*. Neither the Author of the *Independent Whig*, nor one honeſt or rational Man in the World, could ever treat it as the Cauſe or the Badge of Slavery, to propagate univerſal Love, Benevolence and Humanity; but in commanding univerſal Aſſent to Notions, and arbitrary Propoſitions, every thing ſocial and humane hath been rooted up and deſtroyed, every thing free and virtuous oppreſſed and enſlaved. The Love of Mankind was never the favourite Paſſion of ſuperſtitious Prieſts; far otherwiſe: Their Affections regarded only themſelves; and that *Unity among Chriſtians*, which would have been the Bleſſing of Mankind, if preached and improved in the Terms of the Goſpel, by reconciling them to mutual Benevolence, Forbearance and Tenderneſs for each other, was an Unity leſs gainful to ſelfiſh Prieſts, than beneficial to the World; and *Chriſtian Unity* became no longer conſidered as conſiſting in *brotherly Love*, but in *implicit Belief*, which was to ſpread

itſelf

itſelf by deſtroying all who would not ſubm
to the Yoke.

HERE it was that Unity indeed was loſ
and Men, who differed before without dividi
from one another, were armed againſt ea
other by the Influence of ſuch Prieſts and Pa
ricides; their Differences of Opinions becam
improved into the Diviſion of their Intereſt
and all who aſſented to, or diſagreed with, E
cleſiaſtical Syſtems, were ranged on the Side
Heaven or of *Hell*, merely for *advancing* or
poſing the Cauſe of Prieſtly Authority. Hen
God, and the *Son whom he ſent*, were render
Names of Diſcord and Confuſion: Hence tho
whom theſe holy Deceivers had denomina
Saints and Heirs of Glory, became zealous f
the Extirpation of all who had not ſuch gr
cious Marks of Diſtinction; and, had th
fought under the *Banners* of SATAN himſe
they could not have poſſibly been more ze
louſly active for human Havock, and for deſ
lating the Creation.

SUCH Agents of Iniquity, ſuch flaming I
ſtruments of Barbarity, rouſed the Indigna
and engaged the Hands, of the *Independent Wh*
to oppoſe their Claims and Encroachments
every Shape. It became his Duty to do thi
as a Lover of his Country, as a Friend to Ma
kind

kind; and the Seaſon moſt proper for ſuch Oppoſition, is undoubtedly this Time of Liberty, whilſt it is ſafe to ſpeak, and whilſt the Miſchiefs, which he ſpeaks of, are in our Power to prevent. To this remoteſt Corner of the World have Truth and Freedom fled. All the Nations round us know them not, nor are they permitted to know them. All thoſe Countries ſubject to this Deſolation and Slavery, were once as free as ourſelves; but they became enſnared by Prieſts *who LYED*, and deceived them *in the Name of GOD*; and they are ſtill enſlaved by the Power of the Church, which roſe by that impious Method of deceiving and enſlaving. We that are free, as they were once, may become as much enſlaved as they are now; nor are there any Means in our Hands to preſerve our Freedom, and our Happineſs, but by guarding againſt thoſe Arts which ſubverted theirs; namely, the direful Arts and Practice of Lying and Enſnaring *in the Name of* God.

THIS Practice, and theſe Frauds, thus expoſed by the *Independent Whig*, drew that Rage upon its Authors, which muſt be natural to all, whoſe Intereſts and Importance conſiſt in the undue Advancement of Eccleſiaſtical Power. Among theſe ſtood foremoſt the *Biſhop of Mann*, who publiſhed his *Bull* and *Anathema* againſt a Collection

lection of innocent Papers, which advanced
other Propoſitions than thoſe which our
Reformers avowed, and without which the
formation itſelf can by no Pretence be juſtifie
Nay, theſe Papers advanced nothing abo
Church-Power but what all the Clergy h
ſworn, and daily ſwear.

THE Inconſiſtency of this Biſhop, who
other very important Occaſions had manifeſt
no ſuch warm Zeal for his Majeſty's Intere
and Royal Authority, appeared in the Inſtan
before us abundantly groſs, where he laid ha
on that ſacred Name, and on his Royal Orde
for ſuppreſſing *Blaſphemy* and *Profaneneſs*,
ſuppreſs a Book altogether written againſt *Sup*
ſtition and *Prieſtcraft*.

IN the Time of the *Preſton Rebellion*, t
Biſhop of Mann, contrary to his Promiſe, co
trary to his Duty, would not make uſe of t
Prayers appointed to be uſed in all Church
and Chapels for the Succeſs of his Majeſty
Arms, for the Defeat of the *Popiſh Pretende*
who made War againſt him, and for the ſpeed
Concluſion of that unnatural Scene of Wa
With equal Indifference, he ſaw the Clergy o
his Dioceſe refuſe to ſubſcribe the Declaratio
in favour of the Proteſtant Succeſſion, and againſ
all Popiſh *Pretenders*. It never once drew
from him any Exhortations to their Duty, a
Chriſtian

Chriſtians or as *Engliſhmen.* The preſent Eſtabliſhment, and the *Prince on the Throne*, were the leaſt of his Care; and on their Behalf he ſhewed all the Coldneſs and *Moderation* imaginable: Here he denounced no Anathema's; here he iſſued no Bulls. But when *High-Church* and *Prieſtcraft*, which had ſo long been acting for the *Pretender* againſt the *Houſe of Hanover*, when theſe were attacked, *he cried aloud, and ſpared not.* He even took Refuge in the King's Authority, pretending the higheſt Regard for his Pleaſure, and Obedience to his Commands; and, after having ſhewn a notorious Contempt, a moſt indecent Indifference, for theſe Commands, where they concerned *the Pretender*, he ſhewed the higheſt Zeal for them, and Devotion to them, that he might ſtretch them to cenſure and ſuppreſs the *Independent Whig.*

CAN any one believe, that this Biſhop had any Regard for the King in this Inſtance, when he had ſhewn ſo little Reſpect to the Royal Cauſe in Matters of the neareſt and moſt immediate Concern to the Title, the Safety and Preſervation of his Majeſty? I fear, not. Did he not boldly proſtitute, and indeed profane, the Name of the King, to ſerve his own *vile Ends* and *Paſſions*? And can it be well conceived, that he was more ſincere, with relation to the Name or the Cauſe of that GOD, whom he

he drew in to authorize his unchriſtian Cur
than with relation to the *King*, whoſe Ord
he would have ſtrained to juſtify his law
and arbitrary Proceedings? And is there
room to doubt, that it was neither *God*
the *King* whom he was inſpired with Zeal fo
Did he not rather want the Aſſiſtance of
moſt tremendous Name in Heaven, and
of the ſupreme Power on Earth, to adva
his own ſpiritual Authority, and to countena
him in the Exerciſe of *temporal Tyranny*? I
deed, thus it often happens, that *Religion*
Government are wickedly made the Pandar
the Ambition, and worſt *Appetites*, of falſe
corrupt Men.

To ſerve theſe diſcreet and virtuous P
jects, the *Biſhop of Mann* bellowed out his Cu
againſt the *Independent Whig*, calling the wh
Book "One continued Deſign, in which
"DEVIL *and the Authors* have ſhewed the
"moſt Skill to lay waſte the Church of *Chr*
"to overthrow all revealed Religion, to redu
"Men to a State of Nature, and to bring
"Things into Confuſion, both Sacred
"Civil."

WHAT then was to be done upon this dre
ful Occaſion? Why, "To put a Stop, if po
"ble, to the Beginnings of Profaneneſs and
"fidelity, the Clergy of his Diocеſe we
"injoin

"injoine
"Word
"*faſt th*
"*ence*, t
"*well*."
Now
faſt the
Aſſent,
Eſſence o
Prieſtcraf
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quire, W
ters, who

" injoined to convince the People, from the " Word of God, of the Neceſſity of *holding* " *faſt the* Myſtery of Faith *in a pure Conſci-* " *ence*, that is, *Believing well*, as well as *Living* " *well.*"

Now I humbly apprehend, that this holding faſt the Biſhop's *Myſtery of Faith*, this *implicit Aſſent*, which he ſo arrogantly requires, is the *Eſſence of all Superſtition*, and *the Engine of all Prieſtcraft*. This Prohibition of Inquiry, and of the free Uſe of human Judgment, is exactly the very ſame Mandate which the *Biſhop of Rome* would have given to his Dioceſe, with almoſt as much Warmth as the *Biſhop of Mann*.

To *believe well* was undoubtedly meant to induce the laudable Practice of *living well*; and good Morals were the very Doctrines which Revelation was to *enforce*, and not to *ſuperſede*. But whatever the Morals of Men are, or whatever the Integrity of their Lives may be, yet if they teach, countenance, or embrace any thing againſt the *Biſhop of Mann's* Opinion, *let them be* ANATHEMA, ſays the Biſhop; which, I preſume, will influence Heaven, and convince the People, juſt as much, as if he had ſaid, *let them be* ABRACADABRA.

THE People thus ſecured, we are next to inquire, What is to be done with the wicked Writers, who have been the Authors of all the Miſchief

chief that provokes the *Biſhop of Mann*? Fi
then, *They are to be convinced of their Error*
the Spirit of Meekneſs; OR, *They are to be*
off *from the Body of* Chriſt, *that they may* le
not to blaſpheme.

THE *Spirit of Meekneſs* is ſo prevailing in
Biſhop and his *Bull*, that he cannot but rely
its certain Effect in convincing our Auth
of their Error. To treat them as *Heretics*,
Infidels, as *Underminers of the* Chriſtian Re
gion, as *worſe than the very Plague*, as *Coad*
tors with the DEVIL, *&c.* is ſo wonderfu
meek and charitable, that I know not how a
Man can reſiſt Conviction when the *Spirit i*
meek, and the *Arguments ſo ſtrong*, in the Perf
confuting our Errors.

BUT I muſt freely acknowledge, that I a
not ſo clearly of Opinion, that *cutting off* Peo
from the Body of CHRIST, will learn them n
to blaſpheme: For, waving the Queſtion, Wh
is impowered to diſmember *Jeſus Chriſt*, or
cut off any Parts of his *divine Body*? I do n
ſee how Men may be taught *not to blaſphem*
by Cenſures or Perſecution. I rather apprehen
that the worſe they are uſed, the more angr
they will be; and therefore *cutting their Throa*
would be a more effectual Remedy, than *cut*
ting them off from the Body of CHRIST. Na
I am apt to fear, that it is the Biſhop's Meaning

Fo

For I believe he muſt have been often convinced, that Excommunication *ſtops no Man's Mouth*, nor does giving him up to the Devil ever bring him back to God. What then can be meant *by cutting him off, ſo that he may learn not blaſpheme* ? How is he to be CUT OFF? There is in this Part of the Bull ſomething ſo candid and chriſtian-like, as well as ſo humane and merciful, that will ever convince us, that it could be coined no-where except in the dark *Dioceſe of Mann*, or in the bloody *Inquiſition of Portugal.*

LASTLY, We are to conſider what the *Biſhop* propoſes to be done by himſelf and his Brethren: Verily all that the *Independent Whig* ever deſired of them, or of their Order; even to *endeavour, by* WELL-DOING, *to put to Silence the Ignorance of fooliſh Men, holding faſt the faithful Word, as we have been taught, that we may be able, by* ſound Doctrine, *both to* exhort *and* convince *the Gainſayers.*

THIS is a tacit Confeſſion of all that the *Independent Whig* ever advanced: This allows, that they are apt, by *Ill-doing*, to raiſe Objections againſt themſelves; and if they would all of them receive and practiſe the uſeful Leſſon of Doing well, they need never be afraid of any kind of Books, as capable of doing more Miſchief *than the Plague.* But whilſt they continue thoſe Enormities,

Enormities, and arrogant Claims, which juſtly provoked the Authors of the *Independent Whig* to appear againſt them, they will never be able to put Men to Silence, unleſs by the *Biſhop of Mann*'s Expedient of CUTTING THEM OFF, that they may learn not to blaſpheme. For, whilſt any honeſt Man hath Power to ſpeak, I know not how he can be ſilent, when he ſees the Iniquities of thoſe who pretend they are commiſſioned to preach and declaim againſt the Sins of all Mankind. Is it not ſome Matter of Wonder, ſuch as deſerves our Attention, that though the Church of *England* was never endowed with the *Title of Infallibility*, even in its *whole Body*, yet, as if every particular Member (provided he be Ordained) were Infallible, every the *meaneſt Prieſt*, within the Pale of our Church, ſhould pretend to do that which the *Pope* and all *his Cardinals* are not allowed a Right to, ſhould curſe and damn at Will and Pleaſure, declare any one a Rebel againſt God, and give whom he pleaſes to the Devil! But, amidſt all theſe monſtrous and unchriſtian Abſurdities, one Comfort ſtill remains, one Privilege is the Lot of *Engliſhmen*, and I hope it will always be, That however ſuch bold Hypocrites may damn, they cannot CUT OFF; and therefore however they may rage and declaim, we have the leſs Reaſon to fear them.

IT is with great Pleaſure that I can finiſh my Obſervations on ſuch a Libel, with Animadverſions of another Nature; I mean with regard to the then *Governor of Mann*, Capt. HORNE, who ſhewed himſelf on this Occaſion an honeſt and a brave Magiſtrate, protecting the People under his Care from the Inſolence and Uſurpation of this *ſmall*, *aſſuming* Prelate, whoſe Incroachments he controuled, and whoſe *little Arts* he detected, with ſo much Reſolution and good Senſe, that this Inſtance of his Adminiſtration in that *Iſland*, will remain a Monument of his Abilities to ſuſtain a much ſuperior Character.

TO you, Sir, I have therefore ſent theſe Papers; and I hope, that Captain *Horne*'s Example will powerfully recommend itſelf in every Country, where the Liberty of the People, or Inquiries after Truth, are looked on as worthy of Attention: May it ever be eſteemed as it ought to be! And, whenever a *haughty*, *aſpiring*, and time-ſerving Prelate ſhall invade the Rights of the People, to protect the Enormities of his own Order, and attempt to ſuppreſs all uſeful Writings, which ſtrike at the Vices and Corruptions of the Clergy, cloaking his Malice and bad Deſigns under the fraudulent Covert of Zeal for the *King*, and Affection to the *Government*, perhaps without the leaſt ſincere

cere Good-will to either; like *Laud*, the Fa
terer, Miſleader, and Undoer of King *Char*
the Firſt; may there never be wanting a *faith*
ful and an *able* Miniſter, willing and acti
like *Captain* HORNE, to *abate his Pride*, *d*
feat his Malice, and confound his Devices!

I am, SIR,

Your moſt humble Servant,

Decemb. 14.
1731.

W.

THE PREFACE.

I AM to acquaint the Reader, that I have carefully looked over and corrected this Edition of the INDEPENDENT WHIG, and made many neceſſary Additions and Amendments. It has been a general, indeed a juſt Complaint, that Books in England are ſhamefully and incorrectly printed. I think it great Diſhoneſty to publiſh any Book in a careleſs and faulty Manner; but ſuch Diſhoneſty is grown ſo common, that few Bookſellers are aſhamed of it. Gain got this way is ſcandalouſly got, though ſome have proſpered exceedingly by it. Books badly and incor-

rectly printed, like ſophiſticated G
ought to be forfeited and burned. I
ſome conſiderable Bookſellers who have ſ
ſuch manifeſt want of common Hone
this Matter, and even in publiſhing
of our beſt Authors, Authors by whom
have got infinite Profit; that they
to be reſtrained by a particular Law
publiſhing any more Books for ever. -
would you ſay of a Goldſmith, wh
ſelling you a Quantity of Plate, defr
you in the Weight, or ſold you Sil
wrought and full of Droſs?

TO gratify the uſual Curioſity of
ers, I have, at the End of each
put the initial Letter of the Name
Gentleman who wrote it. As there
only Three Gentlemen concerned in th
dertaking, and as their Names are
known, it will be eaſy to diſtinguiſh
by this Mark.

THE Craftſmen, *a Sermon pu*
at the ſame time, under the Name
in the Style, of the late Daniel B
was, for the Conformity of the Subje

the Occaſion of writing it, (which in the Advertiſement prefixed to it I have explained) thought proper to be added to this Impreſſion, and to all that ſhall follow; as was alſo the Biſhop of MANN's *Bull, or his Curſe and Miſrepreſentation of the* INDEPENDENT WHIG, *addreſſed to the Clergy of his Dioceſe, and ſolemnly regiſtred amongſt the Eccleſiaſtical Archives there. It is therefore preſerved here as a great Singularity, which ſhews the Spirit and Rage of the Man, and what ſuch a Spirit would produce, were it let looſe. His Performance, I thought, deſerved no other Anſwer than this, and I deſigned to have beſtowed none upon it: Yet I find, that the* Letter to the Publiſher *has paid it a Diſtinction which I never ſhould, and expoſed at length his Nonſenſe, Fury and ill Names, with maſterly Reaſoning and Style.*

THE Inſcription upon Mr. Trenchard's *Tomb is likewiſe inſerted, with an* Engliſh *Tranſlation of it, out of Reſpect to his Memory, and to the Share which he had*

in the following Work. There is alſo adde to this Edition, A Letter to a Gentlema at *Edinburgh,* concerning *the* buſy an aſſuming Spirit *of the* Eccleſiaſtics, an *their* extravagant Demands *upon the* Laity *Written ſome Years ago, and never befor printed.*

AMONGST the many Invectiv againſt the INDEPENDENT WHIG, *ther came forth one about eight Years ago, unde the Name of a certain Clergyman, who for his own Sake I bring not upon th public Stage, full of Declamation, perſona Railing, and miſerable Cavilling; of a which I ſhould have taken no notice, b that I hear he boaſts what a deadly Sho he gave by it to Mr.* Trenchard. *What h own Vanity may ſuggeſt to him, I know not; but this I know, that Mr.* Tren chard, *though then upon his Death-bed and paſt all Hopes of Recovery, havi read ſome Pages in it, laughed very heart tily at it. He ſaid, That he had alway taken the Author to have been an honeſt and a grateful Man (for he owed mu*

to Mr. Trenchard's *Family)*: But ſince I was miſtaken, I am glad, *ſays he*, to be undeceived, and I rejoice, yea, I rejoice. *This was his Behaviour, theſe his Words. To all this I was Witneſs. The Author calls his Book, An Anſwer to the ſeveral Papers publiſh'd by the Name of the* INDEPENDENT WHIG. *But after much Boaſting, Threatening, and Inveighing, he confines himſelf intirely to the laſt Paper. Againſt that he rants and cavils, in ſuch Language as I ſhould be ſorry to repeat, and yet has the Candor to call his Declamation an Anſwer to the Whole; though, as far as I remember, (for I happened to look into it at that time) he meddles with none but that one Paper, which he has ſtill left unanſwered.*

December 21.
1731.

THE INDEPENDENT WHIG.

NUMBER I.

Wedneſday, January 20. 1720.

The INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER goes about to reform the World, undertakes an Office obnoxious to Malice, and beſet with Difficulties. It ſpeaks a Confidence of his own Capacity, which prompts him to ſet up for the Schoolmaſter of Mankind; and it infers a Charge of Corruption or Ignorance

rance in his Pupils, out of which he aſſumes to whip them. As every Man has a good Conceit of his own Merit, he thinks himſelf undervalued by Inſtruction, and is provoked by Correction. The Confeſſion of our own Weakneſs, and that of another's better Senſe, is generally, both, contained in the taking of Advice, which is ſeldom taken for that Reaſon.

BESIDES, Blindneſs and Prejudice are ſeldom to be reſigned but with Pain: and therefore, for the moſt part, are not reſigned at all. It is but an unacceptable Civility to offer to let in the Rays of Underſtanding upon thoſe Minds, which are us'd to ſubſiſt in the Dark. It is like opening Day-light upon a Neſt of Owls, it always ſets them a Screeching.

THE Difference, however, is conſiderable between natural and acquired Ignorance, and the laſt is much more incurable than the firſt. The one is capable, and often willing, to be informed; whereas the other thinks itſelf above it, and is too wiſe to learn. There can be no Cure for one who is taught to be a Blockhead: His Ignorance is the Fruit of Inſtruction, and has coſt him great Pains; and ſo his Pride is engaged to ſupport it. As he has improved his Mind into learned Darkneſs, he ſtands upon his Guard againſt Common Senſe, is Proof againſt all the Aſſaults of Reaſon, and ſcorns its Power. If he do not

not take you for his Enemy, and uſe you accordingly; yet, at leaſt, he will pity your Miſtakes, and, perhaps, pray for your Illumination.

IT will probably be ſaid, by ſome of my Readers, that I here deſcribe myſelf and my own Performances, and perhaps with too much Truth. There lived, not long ſince, a Poet, who made excellent Criticiſms upon the moſt applauded Plays, and afterwards writ one himſelf obnoxious to them all.

BUT neither theſe, nor any other Difficulties or Diſcouragements, ſhall hinder me from the generous Attempt of endeavouring to reform Mankind. I have the Magnanimity to face them all, and ſet about the Work; though I am ſufficiently ſenſible of the Greatneſs of the Deſign, and have long wiſhed, that ſome abler Genius would have undertaken it.

I CONFESS there have been ſome ſeeming Attempts of this kind, which were carried on with great Dexterity and Wit, and brought great Credit, and other valuable Advantages, to the Authors; but I ſhould be glad to know what Service they have done to the Public. The expoſing of ſmall Faults can do but ſmall Service; and People may be ſingular in their Humours, and vain in their Dreſs, without hurting human Society. A Beau may wear a fine Coat, and a gaudy Sword-knot, without prejudicing

the Commonwealth, or indeed any one Member of it: Nor can I ſee any dreadful Malignity in a hooped Petticoat. A Lady may keep a Squirrel, and diverſify her Face with fifty Patches on a Side, without invading private or public Property. There is no Miſchief in a harmleſs Snuff-box, or a Diamond-ring; nor do laced Cloaths, or a clouded Cane, prejudice Trade; nor the Flirting of a Fan ſhake our Conſtitution. A terrible Fellow with a long Sword may be a peaceable Neighbour; and a Coquette may ſalute her Lap-dog, and yet not endanger our Liberties.

THESE little Sallies and Excreſcences of Humour, as they give real Pleaſure and Happineſs to the Proprietors themſelves, ſo they often entertain wiſer People, who might otherwiſe grow too ſevere for want of a little Laughing. And yet, I will own, that many Papers upon that Subject have juſtly merited univerſal Eſteem and Admiration.

BUT the greater and more important Miſchiefs, which afflict human Society, have been, for the moſt part, left untouched by our fineſt Writers: Prieſtcraft and Tyranny have been ſeldom attacked by any, but rather flattered and ſupported. Mr. *Saville* is ſaid to have replied to a *Frenchman*, who exulted upon the fine Writings of his Countrymen, *That there were but*

but Two Subjects in Nature worth a Wiſe Man's Thoughts, namely, Religion *and* Government; *and they durſt ſpeak of neither.* But it is our peculiar Happineſs to live in a Country, where we may ſpeak our Minds freely and openly upon any Subject, within the Bounds of good Manners and Virtue; which, I hope, I ſhall never tranſgreſs.

I OWN, the *Free-Thinker* is an uſeful, as well as a fine Paper. I have ſeen ſome Diſcourſes of his, which, in my Opinion, are inimitable; eſpecially thoſe upon *Superſtition* and *Enthuſiaſm.* Moſt that come from him are inſtructive, and all are elegant. I hope ſo worthy a Writer has ſuitable Encouragement. I have not the good Fortune to know that ingenious and deſerving Gentleman; but I am told, that, beſides his Capacity and public Principles, and the Work he is now engaged in, he has done perſonal Services to the Government, which, in any other Country, would intitle him to a very good Station in it: If he have none in *This*, it is, no doubt, owing to the public Spirit of the Great; who will, by no Fault or Courteſy of theirs, divert him from inſtructing his Country twice a Week. I ſhall only add upon this Head, that as no Man is ſo well qualified as the *Free-Thinker* himſelf to execute his own Plan,

mine will not by any means interfere with his, as will be ſhewn in my next Paper.

THERE was one weekly Paper, which, had it gone on, would have prevented this; I mean the *Free-Thinker Extraordinary*. It breathed an uncommon Spirit of public Liberty, and ſhewed ſufficiently the Capacity of the Author to do Service to Mankind. But when he had ſhewed his Skill, and engaged our Attention, he dropped us and his Subject; and made it neceſſary, though dangerous, to ſucceed him. It was never asked why he undertook it; for every one ſaw the Reaſons and Advantages of it: But why he deſerted it, has been the Subject of Inquiry; and the rather, becauſe it was evident, that he wanted neither Art nor Materials.

FOR myſelf, who have no manner of Attachment to any Party, I ſhall not be afraid to ſpeak my Mind of All, with that Freedom which becomes Truth and Independency; and the Flattering of Power, in any Shape or Hands whatſoever, ſhall be the laſt Charge againſt me.

THERE is no Power in Names to conſecrate Perſons or Things, or to alter their Nature; and yet the Majority of Mankind have always worſhipped the Idols of Words and Sounds;

and

and a Monoſyllable has often done more than an Army, towards keeping them under Awe and Servitude. In Catholic Countries, the Word *Pope*, or *Prieſt*, carries with it more Reverence than does the *Old* or *New Teſtament*, and more Terror than an armed Hoſt. And lately in *France*, the Words, *Grand Monarque*, or the *Glory* of the *Grand Monarque*, could keep a vaſt Nation in Miſery and Wooden-ſhoes, and carry a Hundred Thouſand of them at a time to the Slaughter.

THIS blind Devotion to Names, ſo inconſiſtent with true Liberty, which ſhews itſelf in *Judging* as well as *Acting*, has alſo prevailed in this free Nation to a Degree ſhameful and dangerous. We know what terrible Lengths the Words *Church*, *Clergy*, *Divine Right*, and the like undefined Nonſenſe, have gone towards enſlaving us; and what a ſteady and ridiculous Reverence is ſtill paid to them, even when they are evidently applied to Purpoſes the moſt impious and tyrannical.

NOR does this Charge of *worſhipping Words* lie altogether at the Door of one Party only. Even that Side, which boaſts a greater Share of Reaſon and Freedom, is manifeſtly guilty of the like Idolatry to Names and Perſons, and in Inſtances of the greateſt Importance. They do not conſider the Speech, but the *Speaker*; nor what

what is done, but the *Doer*; and conſequently praiſe, *by the Great*, in their own Leaders, what they would loudly condemn in any others.

CREDULITY and implicit Belief are equally dangerous in Government as in Religion: They have made the World Slaves, and they keep it ſo. Every Party has its Pope, and ſome have ſeveral; who, like him at *Rome*, never fail to make an ill Uſe of the Faith of their Followers, and deceive thoſe who truſt in them.

I HAVE ſaid thus much to appriſe the Reader, that this will be an Independent Paper, which will ſtoop to no Party, nor have any Friends or Enemies, but ſuch as make themſelves ſo, by eſpouſing the Intereſts of Truth or Falſhood.

G

NUMBER II.

Wedneſday, January 27. 1720.

The Deſign *of this* PAPER.

RELIGION was deſign'd by Heaven for the Benefit of Men alone. It teaches us to moderate our Deſires, calm our Paſſions, and be uſeful and beneficent to one another; and whatever does not contribute to theſe Ends, ought not to be called by that Name. For Almighty God has infinite Happineſs in himſelf, which we can neither diminiſh nor add to; and therefore he can require nothing of us, but for our own Sakes; nor command any thing but what tends to our own Good, both here and hereafter.

I SAY it with the utmoſt Sincerity, that no Man living deſires to pay a more true and affectionate Eſteem and Reverence than myſelf to thoſe Clergymen, who anſwer this End of their

their Inſtitution, and whoſe Lives and Manners grace and adorn their Profeſſion and Doctrine.

I THANK God, I know many ſuch; and perceive, with Pleaſure and Tranſport, a noble Spirit of Liberty and true Religion riſing up among them; which will ſoon flame out far and wide, if it be not ſtifled by thoſe, whoſe true Intereſt and Honour call upon them aloud to give it Aſſiſtance and Protection.

THAT Profeſſion muſt be always moſt honourable and deſerving from Mankind, which is moſt uſeful and advantageous to Men. As it is therefore impoſſible to ſhew too much Reſpect to virtuous Clergymen, ſo the corrupt Part of them cannot be too much expoſed. Since the Poſſeſſion which they have of the Fears and Panic of ſuperſtitious People, and in the tendereſt Seaſons too, enables them to do the greateſt Miſchief; the ſtrongeſt Antidotes ought to be applied to their Poiſon. It will be ridiculous to call for Protection from that Character, which they conſtantly diſgrace, and to ask Aſſiſtance from the Religion, which they neither believe nor practiſe.

I HERE liſt myſelf under the Banners of the former Sort; and deſign by this Work to illuſtrate the Beauty of Chriſtianity, by expoſing the Deformity of Prieſtcraft; to diſtinguiſh the good Clergy from the bad, by giving to each his

his Share of Praiſe or Infamy, according to the different Deeds done by them. I will loſe no Opportunity of doing Juſtice to the former, nor, willingly, to the latter.

IN doing this, I ſhall go far backward, and, taking Things from the Beginning, ſhew in the Courſe of theſe Papers the infinite Evils brought upon Mankind, from Age to Age, by the Pride and Impoſture of corrupt Eccleſiaſtics. I ſhall ſhew what a *Babel* they have built upon the Foundation of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who were made to father Doctrines which they never taught; and to countenance Power which they always diſclaimed. I ſhall ſhew by what Arts and Intrigues they came, from being Alms-men of the People, to be Maſters of Mankind; and how, by pretending to diſpoſe of the *Other World*, they actually uſurped and ruled *This*.

I SHALL ſhew, that notwithſtanding Chriſtianity was firſt propagated by Miracles and Mildneſs only, and the Teachers of it had no Power but to perſuade; making it withal appear, in the whole Courſe of their Lives and Preaching, that they ſought no manner of perſonal Advantage, or any manner of Juriſdiction over their Hearers and Converts; yet they who, without their Inſpiration and Manners, called themſelves their Succeſſors, did by virtue

tue of their Names lay inſolent Claim to Dominion, and carried all Things before them, by the Dint of Terror and Excommunication.

I SHALL ſhew, that though the Clergy, like other Militia, were raiſed and paid for protecting Mankind from their Spiritual Enemy, yet they ſoon made uſe of the Sword put into their Hands againſt their Maſters, and ſet up for themſelves. I ſhall ſhew, that notwithſtanding the whole End of their Inſtitution was to make Men wiſer and better, yet where-ever *They* prevailed, Debauchery and Ignorance alſo prevailed; and the conſtant Leſſon they taught, was blind Belief, and blind Obedience, of both which they made themſelves the Objects. So that Superſtition was an inſeparable Creature of their Power, and the perpetual Iſſue of it; and tainted Morals, and darkened Minds, were the great Props of their Dominion. A good Underſtanding, and an inquiſitive Spirit, led directly to Hereſy; a pious Life was of ill Example, and a Reproach to the Clergy; and if any one gave Offence this way, it was but calling him *Heretic*, and delivering him over to *Satan*: The Man was then undone, and the Clergy ſafe.

I SHALL ſhew how they ſoon baniſhed the meek Spirit of the Chriſtian Religion, and, growing

growing to as great Variance with Mercy, as they were with Reaſon, perverted Religion into Rage, and Zeal into Cruelty. They made the peaceable Doctrine of Jeſus a Doctrine of Blood, and excommunicated and damned by that Name, by which alone Men could be ſaved. It is true they damned one another as much as they did the reſt of the World; for, agreeing in nothing but the great Principle of Intereſt, though they rode upon the Necks of their People, yet they never could be at Peace, nor Eaſe, among themſelves, ſo long as each Individual was not in the higheſt Place. And therefore, becauſe every one of them could not be above all the reſt, they were eternally quarrelling, and giving one another to the Devil.

IF one of them held any Propoſition, true or falſe, it was Reaſon enough for another to deny it, and *curſe* him into the bargain. At laſt, there was not one Principle in their Syſtem but what was conteſted, and they agreed in nothing but their own Power; though, at the ſame time, they diſputed what that was.

IN this everlaſting Scuffle, and Civil War, they had ſo mangled Truth, and muffled it up, that few could diſtinguiſh it from the falſe Images which they had made of it. And yet theſe Men, who, by their conſtant Diſcords and Debates, confeſſed themſelves in endleſs Uncer-

Uncertainties, were the ſure and infallible Guides to others, who were obliged to believe their Gueſſes and Contradictions, on pain of Hell-fire.

I SHALL ſhew what a ſhameful Hand they have always had in bringing and keeping Mankind under Tyranny and Bondage to ſuch Princes as would divide the Spoil with them. In ſuch Caſe, it was a Point of Conſcience, and a religious Duty, for Subjects to be miſerable Slaves; and Damnation but to ſtrive to be happy. But if the Prince happened to be a Lover of Mankind, and endeavoured to protect his People in their Civil and Sacred Rights; then were they the conſtant Incendiaries of every popular and wicked Faction. They preached nothing but Sedition and Blood, till they had worked up their blind and ſtupid Votaries to Rebellions and Aſſaſſinations. To ſuch Conduct is owing a great Part of their Power and Wealth.

I THINK no one, who is the leaſt converſant with Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, will deny that this was the Condition of Chriſtianity before the *Reformation*. The chief Intent of this Paper is to let all the World know it, that they may be upon their Guard againſt the like Miſchiefs. It is certain, that the Demands of the High Clergy, upon the Laity, are as great, if not greater

greater than they were at that Time. As Father *Paul* ſays of *England*, *The Horſe is bridled and ſaddled, and the old Rider is juſt getting upon his Back.*

IT is Time now to conclude this Paper, by ſaying, that if my hearty Endeavours ſhall any ways contribute to detect the Impoſtures, and expoſe the wicked Practices, of thoſe, who, under the proſtituted Name of Sanctity, are Foes to Truth, to Liberty, and Virtue; I ſhall think my Time and Pains well ſpent. But if not, I ſhall have the internal Satisfaction of having attempted at leaſt to attack Vice and Corruption, however dignified or diſtinguiſhed; and the worſt which can be ſaid of me, is,

---- *magnis tamen excidit auſis.*

G.

NUMBER III.

Wedneſday, February 3. 1720.

Of the Contempt *of the* Clergy.

RING the Bells backward! The Temple, the Temple is on Fire! The High-prieſts look aghaſt, and the People ſtare, and all cry out, The Craft, the Craft is in Danger!

THIS I expected, and was prepared for, when I firſt engaged in the Undertaking: Touch a galled Horſe, and he will wince, though 'tis in order to cure him. I knew a Gentleman, who found out a Murderer, by looking ſtedfaſtly in his Face: When any one is conſcious of his own Crimes or Infirmities, he is jealous of every Approach towards a Diſcovery, and often makes one by it.

IT is remarkable, that no Order or Society of Men is ſo apprehenſive of Diſreſpect, or can ſo little bear the Examination into their Pre-

tenſions,

tenſions, as the greateſt Part of the Eccleſiaſtics. If you ridicule or laugh at the Profeſſions of Law and Phyſic, the Lawyers and Phyſicians will laugh with you. The ſame is true of Soldiers, Merchants, and the Profeſſors of almoſt all Arts and Sciences, who generally are the firſt to expoſe the Knaves and Fools amongſt them.

IF a Lawyer, Soldier, or Merchant, deſerve the Pillory; neither *Weſtminſter-hall*, the *Army*, or the *Eaſt-India* Company, are in an Uproar; or complain that the Law, Trade, or the Soldiery, are wounded through his Sides; nor endeavour to raiſe a Mob in his Behalf, or rebel in token of their unlimited Submiſſion to Government. The Fair Sex do not think themſelves ill uſed, when a Baud is tied to a Cart, or naughty Nymph beats Hemp: The Eleven Apoſtles loſt no Credit when *Judas* hanged himſelf; nor would any honeſt Clergyman, tho' even ſo many of the other Sort did the ſame, or if it was done for them.

BUT I do not know by what Judgment or Family it happens, that if you but touch the Pretences or Vices of the Meaneſt of the Eccleſiaſtics, ſo many of their Body are in an Uproar: They roar aloud, their Order is expoſed, their Myſteries derided and profaned, and Religion itſelf in Danger of being ſubverted;

verted; and *Socinian*, *Deiſt*, or *Atheiſt*, is the beſt Word, that is often given to their beſt Friend; and ſometimes all of them are given.

ALL other Societies of Men are contented with the Eſteem and Honour, which reſult from the Uſefulneſs of their Employments and Profeſſions, from the Worth and Capacity of their Members: Yet none ſtand in ſuch a Situation none have ſo many Advantages to acquire Reſpect and Homage, as the Clergy.

THEIR Office is evidently adapted to promote the Welfare of Human Nature, to propagate its Peace and Proſperity in this World, as well as its eternal Felicity in the next; ſo that it is the Intereſt of all Men to honour it; and none but a Madman will condemn and ridicule what has a manifeſt Tendency to the Security and Happineſs of all Mankind.

THE Temporal Condition of the Clergy does likewiſe place them far above Contempt: They have great Revenues, Dignities, Titles, and Names of Reverence, to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of the World; and it is too well known, that Wealth, Power, and Learning, carry to the Vulgar a kind of Myſtery, and diſtant Grandeur, and command not only Admiration and Reverence, but often a ſuperſtitious Veneration.

ADDED to this, they have the Poſſeſſion and Direction of our Fears; they are admitted in Health and Sickneſs: Every *Sunday* they have the ſole Opportunity of gaining our Eſteem by worthy and uſeful Inſtructions, and all the Week by their good Lives: They educate us whilſt young, influence us in our middle Age, govern us in our Dotage, and we neither live nor die without them.

A numerous Body of Men, ſo conſtituted and endowed, ſo privileged and poſted, are capable of being moſt uſeful and beneficent to Society, if their Actions be ſuitable to their Profeſſions. All the World will acknowledge, and pay a willing Homage to their Merit, and there will be no need of demanding, much leſs of extorting Reſpect, or of Complaints and Exclamations for want of it. The Danger lies on the other Side; for there are ſuch Seeds of Superſtition in human Nature, that all our Prudence and Caution will be little enough to prevent even Adoration to their Perſons. If, therefore, they want that Reſpect which they are ſo fond of, they cannot be to ſeek for the true Reaſon, namely, their own Corruptions and Worthleſneſs, which muſt be exceeding great, to get the better of ſo many Advantages.

IF Clergymen would avoid Contempt, let them avoid the Cauſes of it. Let them not

be ſtarting and maintaining eternal Claims
worldly Power: Let them not be hunting a
Honours, courting Preferments, and buſtl
for Riches: Let them not be aſſuming to g
Models of human Government, or to adj
and determine the Titles of Princes: Let th
not pretend to puniſh any Man for his Way
Worſhip, and to give him to the Devil
his Money or Opinion: Let them not join
Factions, and foment Rebellions: Let them
defy Heaven by ſwearing falſly: Let them
promote Servitude in the People, and Barba
in the Prince: and let them not flatter wic
Kings, and plague and diſturb good ones.

LET them win Reſpect, and wear it;
let them not earn Infamy, and demand Ve
ration. Let not thoſe of them, who gra
brutiſh Appetites, and live in all Vileneſs,
Want of Shame to their Want of Grace,
bewail that they are contemned, while
are deſerving it. If a Man pretending to g
Gravity and Regard, ſhould dreſs himſelf u
a Fool's Coat, and a Pair of Horns, would
People laugh at him in ſpite of themſelv
And would not his Reſentment and Reb
add ſtill to their Mirth? A Clergyman, wh
drunk on *Saturday*, will but, with an ill Gr
talk of his Dignity and Embaſſadorſhip on
day. Ought we to own and reverence

Man as our Guide to Heaven, who is himſelf going a contrary Road, and rioting in thoſe Vices which his whole Duty is to reſtrain?

THE Honour therefore of the good Clergy is conſulted and promoted, by expoſing the bad. A profane Prieſt is the Diſgrace and Bane of his own Order, and they who ſtand by him, adopt his Infamy, and defile themſelves. If he neglect God, and diſturb Human Society, how do the Clergy ſuffer, though he be whipp'd or hang'd? His Puniſhment is their Credit and Security, becauſe by it is lopped off from their Body a gangrened Limb, that incumbred and deformed the reſt.

ATHEISTS, who are not reſtrained by the Fear of God, which is ſtronger than all the Laws in the World, ought, in the Opinion of Politicians, as well as Caſuiſts, to be expelled from the Society of Men. And ſhall more Mercy be ſhewn to thoſe, who are ſo hardened in Impiety, that though they believe a God, yet dread not his Vengeance, but ſwear by his great and terrible Name to an avowed Falſhood? Or can the Clergy ſuffer by the Loſs of ſuch execrable Company?

AN unfortunate *Levite*, ſome Years ſince, had his Head cleft by a Butcher, who caught him in Bed with his Wife; and neither the Number of Reverend Auditors, who attended

the Tryal, a due Regard to the Cloth, or to
Apprehenſion of the Carnage it might produce
could hinder the Judge from directing the Jury
to call the Crime only *Man-ſlaughter*. This ſo
provoked the meek Spirit, and Patience, of a
Holy Brother, then preſent, that he cried out in
the Court, *Here's a fine World! If theſe Things
be ſuffered, there will be no living for us.*

No chaſte or ſober Clergyman could be ter-
rified with ſuch an Example, or think the
Church in any Danger by it. Does any vir-
tuous Member of the Holy Order ſuffer either
in his Perſon or Character, if *Biſs* divert his
Spectators in a Pillory, or Parſon *Paul* his Au-
ditors upon a Gallows? None can ſhare in
their Diſgrace but thoſe who ſympathize in
their Crimes, or cenſure their Puniſhment.
How much more honeſt, as well as prudent,
would it be to remove the Guilt from them-
ſelves, by throwing it all upon the devoted
Head; to put the evil Thing out of the City,
and to imitate the Sagacity of the horned Herd,
who always drive the blown Deer from among
them, where he ſeeks his Refuge, though at the
Hazard of involving the whole Tribe in his
Misfortune!

T. & G.

NUMBER IV.

Wedneſday, February 10. 1720.

Of the Explication *of the* Scripture.

TO fear God, and keep his Commandments, is the Summary of the Old Teſtament; and to believe, that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is the Compendium of the New. Whoever can prove his Obedience and Faith, by theſe two plain Duties, fulfils the Law and the Goſpel.

IT was moſt agreeable to the infinite Goodneſs and tender Mercies of God, to make every thing which he requires of us weak Men obvious and clear. The Importance of the Duty implies its Certainty, which is not to be found in Phraſes either doubtful or obſcure. The Scriptures are juſtly ſtyled the *Revealed Will* of God; they are addreſſed to *all* Mankind, and given to remain as a Rule of Faith

and Manners to the End of the World. It muſt therefore follow, that whatever is neceſſary to be known in them, is to be as eaſy and intelligible at one Time as another, and to all Men alike.

WHERE their Meaning cannot be poſitively determined, a new Inſpiration will be neceſſary to reduce them to Certainty; and if that be wanting, every thing elſe is but Conjecture. Whoever therefore goes about to put a Conſtruction upon ſuch Paſſages in Scripture, and injoins us to believe his Interpretation, does not demand Submiſſion to the Word of God, but to his own Authority and Imagination.

WHAT Uſe is there of an unintelligible Propoſition? Or of a Revelation which wants to be revealed? Almighty God will never require of us to ſee in the Dark, till he has given us new Eyes; nor to believe any Article, or obey any Precept, till we underſtand him, and know what he means. A Rule, which is not plain, is no Rule at all: Nor will he make a Law binding, or the Tranſgreſſion of it a Sin, till we know what it is.

IT is true, that human Laws oblige all Men to ſubmit to the Penalty annexed to the Tranſgreſſion, though many perhaps may never hear of them. But this is to prevent the conſtant

ſtant Plea of Ignorance, which otherwiſe would be made by all Offenders. The Corruption and Imbecility of human Nature make this Procedure neceſſary. But it is far otherwiſe in the Diſpenſation of Providence. The Author of it ſees our Hearts, penetrates the moſt ſecret Receſſes of our Souls, makes indulgent Allowances for our Weakneſſes, and expects nothing from us, but what he has given us the Means and Abilities of knowing and performing. He requires us not to make Brick without Straw. He judges by the Intention, not the Action. We cannot offend him, but voluntarily, much leſs offer him an Affront, when we deſign Reſpect and Obedience.

THE Creator and Preſerver of Mankind cannot take Delight in puzzling his Creatures with Darkneſs and Ambiguities, and in Points too where their Souls are in Danger. He is not a rigid Maſter, who would reap where he did not ſow. This would be a cruel Mockery, unworthy of the Divine Being, *who has brought Life and Immortality to Light.*

NOTHING is plainer than the Law and the Goſpel. Whoever ſays the contrary, does no leſs than accuſe the great and good God, and juſtify wicked and wilful Men, whom he has left without Excuſe, by telling them clearly what he expects from them. *What*

does God require of thee, O Man, but to do Juſtice, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly? ſaid one of his Prophets out of his Mouth. I am very ſure there is no Difficulty in underſtanding this.

THE obſcure Paſſages in Scripture could not be intended for our Inſtruction. Infinite Wiſdom has hid them from our Eyes, to be brought to Light in his own Time, and then to anſwer the Ends of his Providence; or perhaps to baffle our vain Pride and Curioſity. Who art thou, O Man, who wouldſt be wiſer than the Omniſcient; make thoſe Things neceſſary, which he has not made ſo; diſcover what he has thought fit to conceal; and know his Secrets whether he will or no? This would be to mend the Scripture; to make it more uſeful than God has made it; to help the Holy Ghoſt, and to teach the Almighty how to expreſs himſelf.

HOW abſurd would it be to ſend Cookmaids and Day-labourers to ſtudy *Ariſtotle* and *Suarez*; to rake into the Jargon of the Schools; to learn all Languages, examine all Syſtems; and to diſcover of themſelves all Errors, Interpolations and Miſtakes; or to do what is much more ridiculous, *that is*, wholly throw themſelves, and their Salvation, in moſt Countries, upon a Confederacy of Men, who have

have an Intereſt to deceive and oppreſs them, and ever did ſo when they had an Opportunity; who have been always at Variance with one another, and with themſelves; and have agreed in nothing but the miſleading of thoſe who truſted them! And yet one of theſe muſt be the unhappy Circumſtance of the greateſt Part of Mankind, if what I have ſaid before be not true; which we may be ſure the Divine Goodneſs cannot permit.

NOTHING is more evident from Hiſtory, than that moſt, if not all, the Improvements and Reformations of Religion have been made, not only without, but in Oppoſition to theſe Men. There have been near a Million of them kept in conſtant Pay for the beſt Part of Seventeen hundred Years, to teach the World by their Precepts, and reform it by their Example; and yet I am perſuaded, they will not pretend, that Religion is plainer, the Scriptures better underſtood, or that Mankind are more wiſe or virtuous for all their Inſtructions. So little have we been benefited by their Labours, and for all the Money they have received! I wiſh I could not ſay, that the World has gradually decreaſed in Piety and Virtue, as theſe its Teachers have advanced in Riches and Power. It is owned by the beſt of themſelves.

IT is the fartheſt from my Thoughts, by any thing I have before ſaid, to undervalue their true Office, much leſs to make it uſeleſs. I ſincerely think it abſolutely neceſſary to the Peace and Happineſs of Society. The *Roman* Conſuls had an Officer attending their Triumphal Chariots, whoſe Buſineſs it was to cry out, *Memento mori.*

I WOULD have theſe too anſwer the ſame End of their Inſtitution; to preſs the Reading of the Scripture upon their Hearers; to ſhew its Excellency and Advantages; to inculcate the *plain Precepts* of Faith and Morality contained in it; and to demonſtrate the Goodneſs of God to Men by proving, that he has laid down to us in plain Words, every Duty which he requires of us, either to himſelf, our Neighbour, or ourſelves. But let them not diſtract inſtead of inſtructing, and confound ignorant People with Metaphyſical Subtilties, which the Wiſeſt cannot comprehend. Let them not ſtrain ridiculous and ſelfiſh Conſequences from obſcure Parts of Scripture, and make the Almighty mean what he never ſaid. Let them give us God's Will in God's Words.

ANOTHER End of their Office, is to execute thoſe Duties of our moſt Holy Religion which the Word of God has left at large for every one to do, but which indeed are neceſ-

ſary

ſary to be performed by ſingle Perſons in the ſeveral Churches or Societies of Chriſtians; ſuch as Reading the Scriptures, and public Prayers, aloud to the Congregation, and Adminiſtring the Sacraments: What by the Goſpel Liberty is the Right of every one, (as ſhall be unanſwerably made out hereafter) is by the Conſent of voluntary and national Churches become the Duty and Buſineſs of particular Perſons, who are ſet aſide and paid for that Purpoſe.

IN what I have before ſaid, I have the Concurrence of the beſt and wiſeſt of our own Clergy, who acknowledge and contend, that we are not to take the Almighty's Meaning at Second-hand, nor receive that for his Will, which we ourſelves do not find to be ſo; but that we are to inquire before we believe, and to be convinced before we aſſent; every Aſſertion or Propoſition, before it is examined, being alike to the Underſtanding, as every Colour is to the Blind. They own, that our Judgment ought to be at no Man's Service, nor our Minds controuled in religious Matters, but by God alone; for as no Man's Soul can be ſaved by Proxy, ſo no Man ought to exerciſe his Faith by Proxy.

G.

NUMBER V.

Wedneſday, February 17. 1720.

The Unfitneſs *of the* Clergy *to Teach* Others.

AS in my laſt Paper, I hope, I have fully ſhewn, that Clergymen have no Right to interpret the Scriptures for other People; ſo I ſhall endeavour in this, to prove that they are, for the generality, the leaſt qualified to do ſo, of any Set or Society of Men, in their preſent State of Learning and Virtue. This I do with a ſincere Deſign to ſerve them, as well as the Laity; hoping, that when they ſee from what Source the Neglect and Contempt, which they ſo much complain of, proceed, they will join heartily in their own Reformation, in anſwering the Ends of their Inſtitution, and in being hereafter as uſeful to their Country,

try, as many of them have been formerly miſchievous.

USE makes every Poſture familiar to the Body, and every Opinion to the Mind. We are told, that the *Brahmans*, in *India*, do, by long Habit, ſo diſtort their Limbs, that they grow in the Situation which they are put in. Every Day's Experience proves, that we aſſimilate with the Company we keep, as well in our Sentiments, as in the Air and Mien of our Bodies. Not only different Nations, but often Sects, Profeſſions, and Trades, are to be known by their Phiz and Behaviour. A Sailor, or a Taylor, (to ſay nothing of their Betters) may be found out, however they diſguiſe themſelves.

NOTHING but keeping the beſt Company can give a free and eaſy Carriage; and an open and generous Converſation alone can diſengage our Minds from the ſtrong Impreſſions of our early Education. The Habit of thinking freely, and of expreſſing freely thoſe Thoughts on all Occaſions, enables us to judge well of Men and Things. Our Minds are poliſhed by Colliſion, and a liberal Converſation not only ſtarts all Difficulties, but ſolves them, if they are to be ſolved.

ALMIGHTY God gives us Faculties to uſe them; and it is Ingratitude, as well as Folly, to

to return the Gift upon his Hands. Truth can never ſuffer by an impartial Examination, but on the contrary will receive Strength and Advantage from it. It is Error and Impoſture alone, which dread a fair Inquiry, as being conſcious of their own Weakneſs.

I think I may therefore ſafely affirm, that whatever Body or Society of Men are moſt reſtrained by themſelves or others, from Reaſoning freely on every Subject, and eſpecially on the moſt important of all, are the leaſt qualified to be the Guides and Directors of Mankind.

I will now examine how far this is the Circumſtance of the Clergy in moſt Countries. They are no ſooner diſcharged from the Nurſe and the Mother, but they are delivered over to Spiritual Pedagogues, who have ſeldom the Capacity, and never the Honeſty and Courage, to venture at a *Free Thought* themſelves, and muſt conſequently be improper Chanels to convey any to their Pupils.

FROM thence they are ſent to the Univerſities, (very commonly upon Charity) where they are ham-ſtringed and manacled with early *Oaths* and *Subſcriptions*, and obliged to ſwear to Notions before they know what they are. Their Buſineſs afterwards is not to find out what is Truth, but to defend the received Syſtem,

Syſtem, and to maintain thoſe Doctrines which are to maintain Them. Not only their preſent Revenues and Subſiſtence, but all their Expectations are annexed to certain Opinions, eſtabliſhed, for the moſt part, by Popes and Synods, in corrupt and ignorant Ages; and even then often carried by Faction and Bribery, in Concert with the Deſigns and Intrigues of Stateſmen; but become ſanctified by Time, and now to be received without Inquiry.

No one can fairly examine what is Truth, who has an Intereſt on either Side of the Queſtion. We are bribed by our Inclinations, in ſpite of our beſt Reſolutions. Who can be heartily angry at an Opinion, which will keep a Coach and Six, or ſtrenuouſly endeavour to find out any Hereſy in it? Beſides, all Men are fond of Reſpect and Homage, and when they are in Poſſeſſion, will eſteem it but an unprofitable Study to find out, that they do not deſerve them.

As Clergymen ſo educated cannot, for the Reaſons aforeſaid, be fair and impartial Judges themſelves of what is Truth, ſo their Authority can give but little Weight to ſuch Doctrines as they may think fit to teach to others. The firſt Queſtion asked of a ſuſpected Witneſs in every Court of Judicature is, Whether he

he gets or loſes by the Succeſs of the Cauſe? And, if either appears, he is conſtantly ſet aſide, and not truſted with an Oath.

IT is demonſtrable in Reaſon, that every Man's Pretences ought to be tried by the ſame Teſt and Rule; and where the Evidence of a Propoſition cannot be clearly ſhewn by one who has an Intereſt to advance it, nor proved by Miracles, all other Perſons have Reaſon to ſuſpect it of Impoſture: When what he offers will indiſputably conduce to his own Benefit, and I have only his Word, that it will conduce to mine, I cannot doubt but his Kindneſs is greater for himſelf than for me, and ſhall conſequently believe, that he is not doing my Buſineſs, but his own.

THE Apoſtles, and ſome of the firſt Chriſtians, did not ſo teach Chriſt. They not only convinced Mankind of the Truth of what they ſaid by Miracles, but made it apparent to all the World, that they ſought no temporal Benefit: On the contrary, they left their Families, their Profeſſions, and all the Comforts of Life, to wander about the Earth, and preach a Doctrine infinitely advantageous to the preſent, as well as eternal State of others; and expected no Reward to themſelves in this Life, but Beggary, Stripes, and even Death itſelf.

IT

IT is not to be wondered, that, in Universities abroad, no ſuch Diſcourſes, or even ſuch diſtant Hints, are countenanced or permitted, which have the leaſt Tendency to oppoſe the Pride or temporal Grandeur of the Clergy; nor any Speculations ſuffered to be vented there, which ever ſo little break in upon received Opinions. It is not only a certain Stop to all Hopes of Preferment, to queſtion the Truth of any of their darling Notions; but you are in Danger of being expelled, and are ſure to be diſcountenanced and contemned.

THE Philoſophy and Learning, there taught and encouraged, are exactly calculated and adapted to this State of Darkneſs and Ignorance: Theſe are nothing but an unintelligible Jargon of undefined Words, and bare Sounds, which mean nothing, and yet can prove every thing. With this Gibberiſh the Pupils there are diverted from ſound Knowledge, by being put upon a wrong Scent; and are hindered from attaining true Wiſdom, by believing that they have got it.

ALL Attempts towards uſeful Learning are neglected and diſcouraged; and nothing is found out to be true in Philoſophy, but is made falſe in Religion; and the Authors and Diſcoverers are branded with Hereſy, if not Atheiſm. Of this the Examples are infinite.

THUS

THUS accoutred, and thus ſet out, our young Eccleſiaſtic commences Governor and Director of Mens Conſciences. He is impatient of the leaſt Contradiction, and is all in a Flame at an Oppoſition which he has not been uſed to. As he never queſtioned the Truth of any of his own Notions himſelf, he grows outrageous at any one elſe who does, and immediately cries out aloud for Fire and Faggot.

TO this it is owing, that the Difference between the controverſial Writings of Gentlemen, and thoſe of Divines, is ſo very remarkable. The firſt are carried on, for the moſt part, with Humanity, and always with good Manners, even when the Matter is moſt poignant and ſarcaſtical. In the latter, at firſt Sight, appears the *Odium Theologorum*; and Rage, Ill-breeding, and Revenge, breathe thro' every Part of them. A proper Diſpoſition this to make Converts, and govern the World!

THIS Temper has (even in *England*) ſhewn itſelf viſibly, in their Treatment of a modern Biſhop *, whom neither his great Penetration, his pious Life, nor the pretended Regard to his paſtoral Function, could protect from Eccleſiaſtical Hatred and Fury, for his having dared to engage in the Intereſt of Mankind.

* Dr. *Benjamin Hoadley*, then Biſhop of *Bangor*, and now Biſhop of *Winchester*.

As

As it is undeniably true, that what I have before deſcribed is the unhappy Circumſtance of the Clergy, in moſt Countries; ſo no Man, who has the leaſt Deſire to promote uſeful Knowledge, true Virtue, and ſound Religion amongſt Mankind, but muſt endeavour to manumit them from this State of Servitude and Darkneſs, even though they ſhould oppoſe it themſelves. Birds and Beaſts uſed to Lodges or Dens, are afraid to go out of them; and even Men long ſhut up in dark Dungeons, cannot for ſome Time bear the Light of the Day. Galley-Slaves, not knowing what to do with Liberty given them, have often, of their own Accord, returned to their Chains; nay, God's own People themſelves longed again for *Egyptian* Fleſh-pots, and *Egyptian* Slavery, when they were fed with Food from Heaven; notwithſtanding which, *Moſes* would not gratify their brutiſh Appetites, but made them happy in ſpite of themſelves.

I would therefore have every Clergyman enjoy the full Liberty which every Layman enjoys. *We* are not confined in our Searches after Truth; and why ſhould the Clergy be confined, in whoſe Hands it is more powerful and advantageous than in ours? The granting of *Eccleſiaſtical Freedom* to Churchmen is as

as equitable as that of *Civil Freedom* to Laymen. I thank God, *we* poſſeſs a glorious Portion of the latter; and I heartily wiſh *them* an equal Portion of the former.

T.

NUMBER VI.

Wedneſday, February 24. 1720.

Of Creeds *and* Confeſſions *of* Faith.

I Have ſhewn in my Fourth Paper, the Boldneſs and Abſurdity of the Expoſition of Holy Scripture, when that Expoſition is maintained and impoſed for Canonical Truth. I ſhall here proſecute the ſame Subject merely as it relates to *Creeds* and *Confeſſions of Faith*.

IN our Diſputes with the Church of *Rome*, we contend, that the Scripture alone is a ſufficient Rule of Faith and Practice; and our Divines have proved it unanſwerably. But when our High-Church Prieſts argue with Diſſenters, and thoſe whom they are pleaſed to chriſten

hriſten Heretics, Holy Writ is not ſo highly omplimented: It is then very ſubject to lead s into Miſtakes, and hard to be underſtood. t is true, 'tis infallible, and was given us from Heaven to *be Light unto our Feet, and a Lamp nto our Paths*; but ſtill it is dark and inſuf-cient without *human Aid and Explication.* or, though it be exceeding plain to us of the Eſtabliſhed Church of *England*, and proves us o be in the Right in every Article, Ceremo-ny and Habit whatſoever; yet it is utterly id from thoſe who will not accept of *our* Guide-nce, and ſubmit to *our* Authority. And herefore if they refuſe to believe and obey ur *Supplements* and *Improvements* of the Bible, nd to accept of the Salvation, which is to be ad in our Church, and the Church of *Rome*, hey ſhall have no Salvation at all. It is fit and rthodox, that Men ſhould periſh for following heir Conſciences, and for underſtanding the cripture without the Leave of the Ordi-ary.

THUS, when they debate with the Papiſts, hey praiſe the Scriptures, inveigh againſt the mpoſing of Opinions, and ſpeak in the Style f Diſſenters. But when they are pleaſed to ebuke Nonconformiſts, they borrow the Lan-guage of Papiſts, urge the Authority of our Apoſtolic Church, and hear Divine Right to judge

judge for others ; and deal hard Language, and worſe Uſage, to all that take the ſame Privileges which they do. There is, however, this ſmall Difference between us Conformiſts and the Schiſmatics : We have good Pay for being Orthodox, and the Separatiſt pays dear for being in the Wrong. If theſe are not two good Reaſons for delivering him over to Satan, I deſpair of finding better.

IN Conſequence of this Power in High Churchmen to be the Mouthſmen of the Bible, which, if we take their Word, cannot ſpeak for itſelf, they claim a Right to make *Creeds* for others : And this is what I am now to examine.

I think it but Juſtice to the Goodneſs of God to affirm, that Belief or Disbelief can neither be a Virtue or a Crime in any One who uſes the beſt Means in his Power of being informed. If a Propoſition be evident, we cannot avoid believing it ; and where is the Merit or Piety of a neceſſary Aſſent ? If it be not evident, we cannot help rejecting it, or doubting of it ; and where is the Crime of not performing Impoſſibilities, or not believing what does not appear to us to be true ? Are Men, who have good Eyes, the more righteous for ſeeing ? Or do they offend in ſeeing too well ? Or do blind Men ſin in not diſtinguiſhing Colours ?

WHEN

WHEN we clearly ſee the Connection of Propoſition, or know that we have God's Word for it, our Aſſent is inevitable. But if we neither comprehend it ourſelves, nor ſee God's Authority for it, and yet ſwallow it, this is *Credulity*, and not *divine Faith*, which can have nothing leſs than *divine Truth* for its Object. When we are ſure, that God Almighty ſpeaks to us, we readily believe him, who cannot lye, nor be miſtaken, nor deceive us: But when Men ſpeak, though from God himſelf, our Belief in them is but human Confidence, if we have only their own Authority, that they had it from God: Their being Biſhops, their being learned, their meeting together in Synods; all this alters not the Caſe: We can judge of their Opinions no otherwiſe, than as of the Opinions of Men; and of their Deciſions, but as of human Deciſions.

WHEN the Articles of any *Creed* appear to be contained in Scripture, whoever believes *that*, does in Conſequence believe *them*; and then ſuch Creed is unneceſſary: But when we cannot, or think we cannot, find them in Scripture, and yet give equal Credit to them, we depreciate and profane the Divine Authority itſelf, by accepting the Words of Man's Invention as wiſer, and more ſignificant, than the Words of God's own chooſing.

WE

WE are ſure, that the Scripture-Phraſes were inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, and as ſure, that our own Forms and Injunctions are human, and framed by Prieſts. It is therefore ſtrange, that the former ſhould be inſufficient and unintelligible, and the latter infallible, and to be embraced and obeyed on the Pain of Damnation; and that the Prieſts muſt do what God Almighty has, without Succeſs, endeavoured to do.

BESIDES, as the Impoſition of human Creeds is contrary to Reaſon, ſo is it alſo to Charity. They were generally made in a Paſſion, not to edify, but to plague, thoſe for whom, or rather againſt whom, they were intended. They were the Engines of Wrath and Vengeance, nor could they ſerve any other Purpoſe. Thoſe who believed them already, did not want them; and thoſe who disbelieved them, were not the better for them. But this was not the worſt of it; for they who did not receive them againſt their Conſcience, were curſed; and they who did, deſerved it. So that either the Wrath of God on one hand, or the Wrath and Cruelty of the Clergy on the other, was unavoidable. If People ſaid they believed, and did not, they mocked God, and ſhipwrecked their Souls; and if they did not believe, and owned it, though they ſaved their

eir Souls, they provoked their Reverend Fa-
ers, and were deſtroyed.

WHENEVER theſe Dictators in Faith had
mind to be miſchievous, and to undo one
ho gave them ſignal Offence, either by his
ood Reputation, or good Biſhoprick, they be-
n his Ruin by their great Care for his Soul;
d ſo invented a Creed for him, which ruined
m effectually, by giving him, as they ſaid,
Satan, but, in Truth, to Beggary, Stripes,
Flames. He therefore who had any Virtue
Religion, was a certain Sufferer by theſe
ſtems of Faith, which were contrived for
t Purpoſe. The Man that had no Conſcience
r Honeſty, was not worthy of their Anger;
which is moſt likely, was on the Orthodox
de; or at leaſt quickly became a Convert to
being, like themſelves, able to ſwallow any
ing.

THUS Creeds, as they were the Reſult of
venge, Pride, or Avarice, were the conſtant
eludes and Introductions to Ignorance, Cru-
y and Blood; and the wretched Laity were
ftily, as well as inhumanly, made the de-
ed and unnatural Inſtruments of butchering
e another, to prove the Infallibility of the
ith-makers; who, while they were wantonly
dding Chriſtian Blood, and dooming to
mnation thoſe who called upon the Name

of the true God, had the ſhameleſs Aſſuran
to miſcal themſelves the Embaſſadors of t
meek Jeſus.

AND indeed, what better could be expect
from Men ſo choſen, ſo unqualified, and ſo i
tereſted, as the Members of theſe gene
Creed-making Councils for the moſt p
were? They were choſen from ſeveral Pr
by a Majority of Votes; and they who we
moſt aſpiring, factious or crafty, carried i
They ſprung from the meaneſt of the Peopl
They were bred in Cells: They popped in
the World without Experience or Breedin
They knew little of Mankind, and leſs of G
vernment, and had not the common Quali
cations of Gentlemen: They were gover
by Paſſion, and led by Expectation: An
either eager for Preferment, or impatient
miſſing it, they were the perpetual Flatter
or Diſturbers of Princes.

THESE were the Men, this their Charact
When theſe Reverend Fathers were got to
ther in a Body, by the Order of a Prince, o
Pope; who, having his Neceſſities, or t
Ends of his Ambition, to ſerve, choſe prop
Tools for thoſe Purpoſes; they were direct
to form ſuch Creeds and Syſtems of Faith,
his preſent Views or Intereſts made requi
for Mankind to believe.

IN this new Imployment every Member, we may be ſure, was forward to ſhew his Talents in ſtarting new Tenets, or in contradicting thoſe already ſtarted, and ſo to make himſelf conſiderable enough for that Preferment which he was reſolved to earn one way or another. And this being the great Aim of them all, Jealouſies and hard Words were carried to the moſt violent Pitch. There was no End of their Wrangling and Reviling. Not content to abuſe each other by Word of Mouth, they ſometimes ſcolded in Writing; and every Reverend Father drew up a bitter *Billingſgate* Petition againſt another Reverend Father. Sometimes, not ſatisfied with Vollies of Scurrility, unheard of in Aſſemblies of Gentlemen, they had recourſe to Club-law, and made good their Inventions and Diſtinctions with Blows and Blood. And if the Truth could not be found out by Scolding, Contradiction, and Battle, it was not found out at all.

THUS any Emperor or Pope might have what Creed he pleaſed, provided he would be at the Pains and Price of it. And for the reſt of Mankind, they had this ſhort Choice, *To comply*, or be undone.

G.

NUMBER VII.

Wedneſday, March 2. 1720.

Of Uninterrupted Succeſſion.

SINCE all the moſt idle and viſionary Pretences of the Popiſh and Popiſhly affected Clergy, have their Ends, and their Danger, and therefore ſhould be narrowly watched, and vigorouſly oppoſed, I ſhall in this Paper inquire into the Validity of a principal Claim of theirs, I mean that of *Uninterrupted Succeſſion*; and endeavour to find whether there is any Foundation to ſupport this Corner-ſtone of their Authority, except in their own wild Imaginations.

ONE might reaſonably imagine, that a Doctrine of ſo much Importance to the temporal and eternal State of all Mankind ſhould be expreſly laid down, and fully explained, in the Holy Scriptures, to prevent all Poſſibility of Miſtake

Miſtake about it. But, inſtead of this, the Word, as far as I remember, is not once mentioned there, nor any other Word equivalent to it; ſo that we are under a Neceſſity of recurring to the Clergy themſelves for Information: And here too we are as much bewildered as before; for ſome of them boldly aſſert it, and others flatly deny it.

BESIDES, thoſe who hate and damn one another, claim it equally to themſelves, and deny it to others. Thoſe who are Succeſſors to the Apoſtles in *England*, diſown their Brother-ſucceſſors beyond the *Tweed*, and about the *Lake*; and they their Brother-ſucceſſors at *Rome*; and they theirs in *Greece* and *Armenia*, as well as every-where elſe. Now all theſe, who ſo confidently aſſume the Succeſſorſhip to themſelves alone, are as oppoſite to each other in Sentiments and Worſhip, as Light is to Darkneſs. They cannot therefore all have it; and if only one has it, how ſhall we know who he is? No Man's Teſtimony ought to be taken in his own Caſe; and, if we take that of other People, there are twenty to one againſt them all.

IF the Clergy of the Church of *England*, as by Law eſtabliſhed, be, of all the Reformed, ſuppoſed to enjoy this Line of Entail intire to themſelves; pray, how came they by it? Not

from the *Reformation*, which began not till near Fifteen Centuries after the Apoſtles were dead; and *Cranmer* owned Ordination *then* to be no more than a Civil Appointment to an Eccleſiaſtical Office. It is certain, that at that Time this *Utopian* Succeſſion was not ſo much as thought of by any who embraced the Proteſtant Religion. At preſent, indeed, and for a good while paſt, the Jacobite High Clergy contend for it with equal Modeſty and Truth. But, in order to adopt it, they are forced to drop the *Reformation*: For,

YOU muſt know, courteous Reader, that this ſame Succeſſion is now deduced from *Rome*, and the Pope has had the keeping of it, who, by all that adhered to the *Reformation*, was held to be *Antichriſt*, and the *Man of Sin*. He was often an Atheiſt, often an Adulterer, often a Murderer, always an Uſurper; and his Church has conſtantly lived in groſs Idolatry, and ſubſiſted by Ignorance, Frauds, Rapine, Cruelty, and all the blackeſt Vices. It is certain, that ſhe was full of Wickedneſs and Abomination, and void of all Goodneſs and Virtue, but that of having kept the Apoſtolic Orders pure and undefiled for our modern High-Churchmen.

HOWEVER, I think, they themſelves ſeem to be now ſenſible, that it will be a difficult Matter

Matter to make out, this way, their Kindred to the Apoſtles, without being nearer akin to Popery. They are therefore forced to own the Church of *Rome* to be a *true Church*. Nor ought we to be ſurpriſed, if, in ſucceeding to the Orders of that Church, they alſo ſucceed to moſt of her good Qualities. I confeſs, amongſt us Laymen, it would look a little abſurd, if any one ſhould gravely aſſert, that "indeed *Lais* was a filthy Strumpet, and no "virtuous Woman would converſe with her; "but, for all that, ſhe was a *true Virgin*, and "*all Chaſtity* was *derived* from *her!*"

But ſuch Abſurdities as theſe go for nothing amongſt ſome Sorts of Eccleſiaſtics. We will therefore, in the next Place, inquire what it is which they would ſucceed to. The Apoſtles had no Ambition, Juriſdiction, Dignities, or Revenues, to which they could be Succeſſors. We read not in Scripture one Word of Eccleſiaſtical Princes, Popes, Patriarchs, Primates, *&c.* On the contrary, our Saviour himſelf declares, that *his Kingdom is not of this World*; and when the young Man in the Goſpel (St. *Matth.* chap. xix.) asked of him, *What he ſhould do to obtain eternal Life?* he anſwered, that, beſides keeping the Commandments, he ſhould *ſell all that he*

had, and give it to the Poor. N. B. He did not bid him give a Peny to the Prieſts.

IN the xxth Chapter of the ſame Goſpel, our Saviour takes Notice to his Diſciples, that the *Princes of this World exerciſe Dominion over them; but*, ſays he, *it ſhall not be ſo amongſt* YOU; *but whoever will be great amongſt you, let him be your Miniſter; and whoever will be Chief, let him be your Servant.* Nay, he ſays, that even the *Son of Man came not to be miniſtered unto, but to miniſter.* In the xxiiid Chapter he condemns the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, for loving the *uppermoſt Rooms*, and the *chief Seats* in the *Synagogue*, and their deſiring to be called of Men *Rabbi*; and he forbids all this Pride to his *Diſciples*, as well as his other Hearers; and orders them not to call one another *Maſter*: *For one*, ſays he, *is your Maſter, even Chriſt; and he that is greateſt among you ſhall be your Servant.* Nor do I find, that, while he was upon Earth, he laid Claim to any Power but *to do the Will of Him that ſent him.* Indeed, after his Reſurrection, he tells his Diſciples, that *all Power is given to him in Heaven and in Earth*; and he bids them teach it to all Nations, and baptize them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt; but he does not give them the leaſt Power or Dominion, of any kind whatſoever.

AND

AND it is plain, that his Diſciples underſtood him ſo. St. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, in his ſecond Epiſtle to them, Chap. i. that they had not *Dominion over their Faith*, but *were Helpers of their Joy*. In the fourth Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, he tells them, that *they preach not themſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus their Lord, and themſelves* THEIR *Servants for Jeſus ſake*. In the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. iii. he admoniſhes them *not to glory in Men*, no not in himſelf, nor *Apollos* nor *Cephas*; and tells the People, that even the Apoſtles themſelves, and all Things, are THEIRS, and they are Chriſt's, *and Chriſt is God's*. In the ninth Chapter he tells them, that though he is free from all Men, yet he has made himſelf SERVANT unto all, that he might gain the more. St. *Peter* alſo, in his firſt Epiſtle, Chap. v. exhorts the Elders to *feed* the *Flock* of *Chriſt*, and to take the Overſight thereof, not by *Conſtraint*, but *willingly*; not for *filthy Lucre*, but of a *ready Mind*; neither as being LORDS *over God's Heritage*, but as being *Examples to the Flock*.

NOW either theſe Elders were Clergymen, or they were not: If they were Clergymen, their pretended Succeſſors may ſee upon what Terms they are to be *Feeders*, and *Overſeers* of the *Flock of Chriſt*: But, if they were only

Laymen, then it is plain, that no other Qualifications were neceſſary to a *Spiritual Shepherd*, than a willing, diſintereſted, and humble Mind; and all Subjection is, in the fifth Verſe, commanded to be reciprocal --- *Likewiſe, ye Younger, ſubmit yourſelves to the Elders: Yea, all of you be ſubject to one another, and be cloathed with Humility; for God reſiſteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.*

FOR myſelf, I confeſs, that I am not Maſter enough of any Language to find Words more expreſſive, or which can more fully renounce all Sorts of Juriſdiction and Dominion, than thoſe in the Paſſages which I have here quoted: And nothing can be more ridiculous, as well as impious, than to oppoſe them with equivocal, doubtful, and figurative Expreſſions. If the Popiſh Prieſts could but find out one ſuch clear Text on their Side, how would they exult upon it!

AS I have made it fully appear, that the Apoſtles underſtood our Saviour in this Senſe; ſo it is evident, that the firſt Chriſtians had not the leaſt Apprehenſion, that the Apoſtles claimed any Power or Authority to themſelves. They were poor Men, of mean and mechanical Profeſſions, who left Fathers, Mothers, Children, Families, Trades, and renounced all the good Things of this World, to wander about

it,

it, and preach Chriſt. Their Diſintereſtedneſs and Sufferings were powerful Arguments of the Truth of their Doctrines: Whereas, if they had told their Hearers, in the modern High-Church Strain, That "as ſoon as they became "their Converts, they became alſo their *Spi-*"*ritual Subjects*; That they themſelves were "*Eccleſiaſtical Princes*; and that Spiritual Go-"vernment was as much more excellent than "the Civil, as Heaven was than Earth, yea "much more ſo; That the Epiſcopal Honour, "and ſublime Dignity, could not be equalled "by the Glory of Kings, and the Diadems "of Princes; That Kings and Queens ought "to bow down to the Prieſts with their Face "towards the Earth, and lick up the Duſt of "their Feet"----- With whole Volumes more of ſuch blaſphemous Traſh, as is vended by Dr. *Hickes*, Mr. *Leſley*, and indeed by almoſt all the High-Church Writers; and yet not publicly diſapproved or cenſured by the *Convocation*, or any *Body* of the Clergy, though they have ſhewn an outrageous Enmity to all who have aſſerted the contrary Principles: If the Apoſtles had told them too, That they themſelves had a Right, not only to the Tenth Part of their Eſtates, but of their Labour; and "that ſince they (their Hearers) adminiſtered "ſo many Things to a King, who adminiſters

" Peace and War for bodily Safety; how ought
" they not to adminſter more liberally to him,
" who adminiſters the Prieſthood towards God,
" and ſecures both Body and Soul by his
" Prayers ? "

I SAY, if any of this choice Fuſtian had been broached to the World, at the firſt Opening of the Goſpel, what Progreſs could Chriſtianity have made? How could the Apoſtles have been diſintereſted Witneſſes of the Truth of the Doctrines, which gave them ſuch Juriſdiction, Dominion and Riches? And how juſtly would the Princes and Powers of the Earth have puniſhed ſuch Uſurpations upon their Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Authority?

THE Silence alone of the Enemies to Chriſtianity, is a ſufficient Confutation of this wicked and black Calumny, caſt upon them by their pretended Succeſſors; but which their bittereſt Oppoſers had more Modeſty than to charge them with, though they ranſacked Earth and Hell for all other Sorts of Scandal.

T. & G.

NUMBER VIII.

Wedneſday, March 9. 1720.

Of Uninterrupted Succeſſion. *Pt.* II.

DR. *Tillotſon*, in his Sermon againſt *Tranſubſtantiation*, tells us, that "it might "well ſeem ſtrange, if any Man ſhould write "a Book to prove, that an Egg is not an "Elephant, and that a Muſquet-bullet is not "a Pike." He might have added, that this was the hard Circumſtance which the Laity were reduced to in their Diſputes about Religion with moſt Sets of Eccleſiaſtics; and, what is ſtill worſe, when they had proved theſe Propoſitions, they were never the better.

THE greateſt Part of Mankind have learned to judge of Religious Matters by other Faculties and Senſes, than thoſe which God Almighty has given them. The firſt Thing they are taught is, that Reaſon may be on one Side of

of the Queſtion, and Truth on the other; which Maxim being well eſtabliſhed, there will be an End of all Reaſoning ever after; and there can be no longer any Criterion between Truth and Falſhood: But thoſe, who, by Education and Cuſtom, have once got Poſſeſſion of their Superſtition and Fears, may impoſe upon them what crafty and advantageous Doctrines they pleaſe.

BY theſe means the Chriſtian Religion, moſt eaſy and intelligible in itſelf, and adapted to the meaneſt Capacities, is become, in moſt Countries, a Metaphyſical Science, made up of uſeleſs Subtleties, and inſignificant Diſtinctions; calculated to gratify the Pride of corrupt Clergymen, by making them admired and reverenced by the People, for their profound Knowledge, and deep Learning; and conſequently Religion is wholly left to their Care and Conduct, as being infinitely above poor *Lay-apprehenſions*. And to this the World is beholden for the Depravation of Virtue and Morality; and for all the Domination, Pomp and Riches of the Popiſh Prieſthood.

I THEREFORE hope, that no one will condemn an Undertaking intended to reſtore Chriſtianity to its primitive Innocence, and native Simplicity; to oppoſe common Senſe againſt pompous Nonſenſe, and learned Abſurdity; and

and to ſhew how, and in what Meaning, *The Kingdom of Heaven is ſaid to be revealed to Babes and Sucklings, and hid from the Learned and Wiſe:* That is to ſay, it is eaſily learned and known, by thoſe who make uſe of their natural Faculties, and uncorrupted Reaſon; but will always be hid from ſuch, who hunt after it in the Schools of the Philoſophers, or in any ambitious and factious Aſſemblies and Synods of Popiſh Eccleſiaſtics. I ſhall therefore endeavour to keep this plain and eaſy Subject clear of all vain Philoſophy, and Metaphyſical Gibberiſh, with which the Adverſaries always attempt to entangle it; as knowing well, that if they can but make it unintelligible, their Authority alone will decide every Queſtion in their own Favour.

As I conceive I have fully ſhewn, in my laſt Paper, that the Apoſtles claimed no Juriſdiction, Authority, or coercive Power of any kind whatſoever, over their Hearers; but only obeyed the Will of their Maſter, in delivering a Meſſage from Heaven, for the infinite Benefit of Mankind; and to prove their Miſſion, brought their Credentials, namely, *The Power of doing Miracles*, along with them: So I ſhall ſhew, that what Power they had, (except that which was miraculous, and died with them) or, to ſpeak more properly, *what Right* they had

had to perform the Duties and Offices of Chriſtianity, did not deſcend to one Chriſtian more than another; but that all were equally impowered to exerciſe alike the Functions of their moſt holy Religion.

WHEN a Command is given from God to Men, to do and perform any Action, it is not only the Right of every one, but it becomes his Duty, to execute it himſelf, when he is capable of doing it; unleſs the Precept directs ſome other Manner of Performance: And whoever aſſerts, that it does, is obliged to prove it. And he muſt not be ſurpriſed, if in a Caſe of this great Conſequence, we ſhall expect plain and direct Texts, deſcribing the Extent of the Power demanded, and the Perſons to whom it is given. It will not do his Buſineſs to pick up Two or Three ſcattered and disjointed Sentences, and, putting them upon the Rack, torture them till they confeſs what they never meant, againſt the whole Current of Scripture. It muſt be laid down plainly and directly, and made obvious to the meaneſt Capacities; not depending upon the Criticiſms of *Rabbinical* Learning; not ſublimated from *Jewiſh* and *Heathen* Traditions; nor extorted from doubtful, equivocal, and unintelligible Expreſſions. It is not conſiſtent with the Goodneſs of God, to ſuffer a Power, upon which the

the Being of Chriſtianity, and the Temporal and Eternal Happineſs of all the World, depend, to remain in Obſcurity and Darkneſs; and therefore we may be ſure, that whatever of this kind does ſo, is the Invention of ambitious and wicked Men, and not the Will of the great and good God.

IT will be incumbent on them to ſhew one clear and direct Text, where our Saviour confines the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments to any Set of Men whatſoever. The contrary of which is ſo evident, that there is not in Scripture one Inſtance where the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper was ever adminiſtered by any one, who, in our Tranſlation of the *New Teſtament*, is ſtyled *Biſhop* or *Presbyter*. And it is as plain, that the Right of Baptizing belonged to all Chriſtians equally. Both which I ſhall make out unanſwerably hereafter, in ſeparate Papers. I ſhall alſo ſhew, that the boaſted Power of Excommunication is nothing elſe but a Liberty, which every Man has over his own Actions, in converſing or mingling with what Society he pleaſes; or, at moſt, only a Precept or Exhortation, not to keep ill Company, and to remove ſuch, or ſeparate from them.

BUT to proceed with my Subject: If a Chain of uninterrupted Succeſſion had been neceſſary, an uninterrupted Courſe of Talents,

Grace

Grace and Abilities, ſuperior to thoſe of all other *Lay-Chriſtians*, had been neceſſary alſo, to have made the Clergy reſemble thoſe whom they were to ſucceed in an Employment which required the higheſt. But there is no ſuch peculiar Genius or Virtue found amongſt them. They are qualified by Means evidently human for this Divine Calling. They are ſent to Schools and Univerſities to learn to be Succeſſors to the Apoſtles (I will not ſay of them, what Mr. *Dodwell* ſays of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *that they make uſe of Wine, amongſt other bodily Helps, to obtain the Prophetic Spirit*): And all who have the ſame Senſe and Opportunities, thrive at leaſt as faſt as thoſe who are Candidates for the Prieſthood. They might, if they pleaſed, apply their Learning to the ſame Uſes. And as to Grace, Piety, and Humanity, I think verily, that the Modeſty of the Clergy will not let them pretend to excel their Lay-neighbours in thoſe Endowments.

THE Apoſtles were inſpired, had the Gift of working Miracles, could beſtow the Holy Ghoſt, had the Diſcernment of Spirits: They were conſequently proper Judges of the Fitneſs of Men for the Miniſtry, and could confer that Fitneſs. Our modern Divines are not inſpired, cannot work Miracles, nor give the Holy Ghoſt; nor can many of them even find out their own

own Spirit, ſo far are they from diſcerning that of other People.

THE Apoſtles were a Set of extraordinary Perſons, appointed by the Son of God to convert all Nations, and had extraordinary Endowments given them for that End. Their pretended Succeſſors are a Race of very ordinary Men, poſſeſſed of no extraordinary Abilities; ſent by no Divine Authority; nor to convert any Nation; but only take up a Trade to get a Livelihood.

CHRIST's Apoſtles were Pen-men of the Holy Ghoſt, and writ Books of Scripture: But, pray, what New Goſpel do our modern Apoſtles give us? (I wiſh none of them had ever confounded the Old) They are at beſt but Note-makers and Commentators; in which Characters Laymen have ſucceeded as well, even by their own Acknowledgment.

MINELLIUS and *Gronovius* have written Notes upon *Virgil* and *Livy*: Pray, are they Succeſſors to *Virgil* and *Livy*, for that Reaſon? And are the ſtupid Commentators Succeſſors to the great *Roman Orator*, becauſe they have ſlept over his Works, and darkened them with Illuſtrations? Or is every one, who ſails to *America* for *Gain*, a Succeſſor to *Chriſtopher Columbus*, who diſcovered and pointed out the Way to the *New World*?

THE

THE great Buſineſs and Commiſſion of the Apoſtles, was to convert Mankind. Now, I would be glad to know how they can be ſucceeded in a Thing, which could be done but once; and in Countries, where it is already done? I mean, the Converting of a Nation, ſuppoſe *Greece*, *England*, or any other. What muſt the *Jews* have thought of a Set of hare-brained *Iſraelites*, who would have demanded of them vaſt Reſpect and Revenues, for ſucceeding *Moſes* in redeeming them from Captivity to *Pharaoh*, and for leading them every Day of their Lives out of the Land of *Egypt*, Seventeen Hundred Years after they had left it? Or could any Number of *Jews* ſucceed *Nehemiah* in bringing back the captive Tribes from *Perſia* and *Babylon*? Can any one ſucceed the Duke of *Marlborough*, in fighting the Battle of *Hochtſted*, and relieving the *German Empire*? I preſume, that every Foot-Soldier is not a Succeſſor to *Alexander the Great*; nor every Sergeant of the Guards deſcended in a *Military Line* from *Julius Cæſar*.

N. B. Having ſhewn that the Apoſtles have left no Succeſſors, there is an End of the Queſtion, Whether their No-Succeſſion is Interrupted or not? But my Reſpect to the High Clergy obliging me to give them all Advantages, I will, in ſome future Paper, admit, that

that ſuch a Succeſſion had once a Being: And then will undeniably prove, that it has been frequently, I may almoſt ſay conſtantly, interrupted and broken, under all thoſe Heads which they make neceſſary to the Continuance of it.

T. & G.

NUMBER IX.

Wedneſday, March 16. 1720.

Of the Clearneſs *of* Scripture.

I SHALL in this Paper endeavour to confirm what I have ſaid in my laſt; by ſhewing, that God Almighty, in revealing his Will to Mankind, has always taken effectual Care, that it could not be miſtaken; and therefore made it ſo plain, as to need no farther Explanation, in all Things which are neceſſary for us to know.

WHEN God would have his Pleaſure known to Men, it is agreeable to his Goodneſs to make it evident; when he would not, it is agreeable

agreeable to his Wiſdom to make it impenetrable. Scripture was not given to make Work for Interpreters; nor to teach Men how to doubt, but how to live. The Holy Spirit has made undeniably clear and manifeſt, all those Precepts that injoin Faith and Obedience, which are the great Points of Religion; and weak Men cannot correct him, and do it better themſelves.

I THINK it is generally granted, that Revelations are no more, and that Prophecy hath ceaſed. The Reaſon given for this, I take to be a very good one; namely, that God has already ſufficiently diſcovered his Mind to Men, and made his Meaning manifeſt: If it were otherwiſe, we ſhould, doubtleſs, have his extraordinary Preſence ſtill; but as we have not, it is to be preſumed, that we have no Occaſion. He appeared himſelf, whilſt Men were in Darkneſs; but now, that he has ſhewn them his *marvellous Light*, he appears no more. His Preſence is ſupplied by his Word; which being addreſſed to all Men equally, and not to *one Tribe of Men* to interpret it for the reſt, it follows, that all Men have in their Power the Means to underſtand it. *Old Revelation* therefore does not want the Aſſiſtance of *New*, nor has the Omnipotent any need of *Proſecutors*.

WHILS

WHILE God is delivering his Law to the World, he is plain even to Exactneſs; and his Orders are full and circumſtantial even about the minuteſt Points. This is eminently proved by his Manner of giving Laws to the *Jews*. Every Ceremony, every Inſtrument and Garment, uſed in their Worſhip, is preciſely deſcribed and directed. The Trumpets, the Candleſticks, the Lamps, the Spoons, the Snuffers, are all of his own Appointment, both as to the Materials, and the Uſe of them. He makes it impoſſible to miſtake him. He calls the Prieſts by their Names, points out their Perſons, and ſhews them every Branch of their Office. He limits and governs their Behaviour while they are about it; and does not leave it to *their* Wiſdom to invent ſuch Poſtures and Ceremonies, as *they* think fit to call *decent* and *ſignificant*. They had not the Privilege to chuſe their own Garments. *Moſes*, who was the *Civil Magiſtrate*, had it in his Charge to *ſanctify* and *conſecrate* their Perſons. Their Buſineſs in the Sacrifices, is pointed out to them: They are to put their Hands upon the Head of the Beaſt, and to receive its Blood, and to make Fires. They are not, as I remember, once made uſe of to ſpeak God's Mind to his People; *That* is the Duty and Commiſſion of the *Civil Magiſtrate*, and *Moſes* performs

performs it. They had not the leaſt Hand in the Celebrating of the *Paſſover*, the *Jewiſh Sacrament*, to which ours of the *Lord's Supper* hath, it is ſaid, ſucceeded: And as little were they employed in that other of *Circumciſion*, the reputed Anceſtor of *Baptiſm*. In ſhort, their whole Function was to be *Servants* and *Operators* in the *Houſe of Sacrifice*.

IF Almighty God was thus punctual and particular in the Rituals and Outſide of his Worſhip, can we imagine, that he was defective or obſcure, in declaring the more weighty Points of the Law? No---When our firſt Parents broke the Covenant, they did it wilfully, and could not pretend, that they underſtood it not: *Of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it*, was all the Injunction that was laid upon them. And there was no need of a Commentator here. The Text might have been rendered more perplexed, but not more plain.

THE Covenant which he made with *Abraham*, was not leſs clear. He was to *be the God of* Abraham, *and of his Seed*; and *every Male of his Race, and thoſe that were bought with Money, were to be circumciſed.* There were no more Words to this Contract; and the Patriarch and his Iſſue had but one ſhort Syſtem of Divinity,

ivinity, moſt intelligible of itſelf, and in no ſe darkened with Gloſſes.

THE Decalogue, or the Law of the Ten mmandments, delivered by God himſelf m *Mount Sinai*, with great Glory, and aſto-hing Circumſtances, was little elſe but the w of Nature reduced into Tables, and ex-ſſed in Words of God's own chuſing; and y were worthy of the Omnipotent and In-ible Author; for they were ſo plain and in-putable, that not a ſingle Perſon of all the elve Tribes, ſo addicted on other Occaſions Contradiction and Wrangling, ſo much as tended not to underſtand them: Nor was e one Man, much leſs a *Body of Men*, ſet t to explain them.

WHEN God ſpoke to the *Jews* by his Pro-ts, the ſame Method of Clearneſs was ob-ed. The Admonitions given, and the Judg-nts denounced, were adapted to the Capa- of every one concerned. The *Jews*, it is , did not often believe them, at leaſt not d them; but it was never pleaded, that they not comprehend them. God inſpired, the phets ſpake, and all underſtood; but nei- *Creeds* nor *Paraphraſes* were made, for were not neceſſary. At laſt, indeed, the *ſts and Phariſees made void the Word of by their Traditions, and very rigidly tithing*

Mint and Cumin, neglected the greater Thi of the Law, and taught for Doctrines the C mandments of Men. But we know what Tha and Character they had for their Pains fr the Saviour of the World, and what a terri Doom he pronounced againſt them. Read xxiii^d Chapter of St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, and the Deſcription of theſe vile Hypocrites, then conſider, whether they be at this D without Heirs and Succeſſors. Indeed it ſee to me to be the only Succeſſion which has been interrupted.

THE Goſpel, when it came, as it was excel all other Laws, in its End and Uſe neſs, ſo was it the ſhorteſt and plaineſt l tution in the World. It only added the D of Faith to that of good Works, which the great, if not the only, Buſineſs of Moral Law. To believe that *Jeſus C was the only Son of God*, was the great P ciple of the Chriſtian Religion. Nor was Practice of this Belief attended with the Difficulty, ſince our Saviour proved his ſion and Omnipotence, by Miracles that undeniable and convincing. For the T of them he appealed to Mens Senſes; was neither Myſtery nor Juggling in his ons, nor did they want any body to ex them.

ALL this is further confirmed by the Conduct of the Apoſtles. The conſtant Drift and Tenour of their Lives and Preaching, was to perſuade Mankind to believe in *Jeſus Chriſt*. In order to which they worked Miracles, and gave the Holy Ghoſt. The Precept was thus ſhort, and the Motives to comply with it, were ſo irreſiſtible. Hence it was, that ſometimes thouſands were convinced in a Moment, without either *Commentaries*, or *Creeds*, or *Catechiſms*: And indeed who could avoid believing a Propoſition that proved itſelf?

THE Apoſtles, when they had converted one City, did not ſtay to eſtabliſh a Hierarchy there only, and to tell the *ſame Thing* over and over again to thoſe that knew it already. No —— when they had planted the Faith in one Place, they travelled to another, and preached the Goſpel to the unconverted World; leaving thoſe already converted, to perform Chriſtian Worſhip *their own Way*. If they believed in Chriſt, and lived ſoberly, the Apoſtles deſired no more. Thoſe were the *Two Things needful*; nor were they more needful than clear.

IN this plain Manner did God Almighty always diſcover himſelf in his Will, whenever he diſpenſed his Laws to Men. On the other hand, while he hid himſelf from the Heathen

World, did their Prieſts ever diſcover him
No, they had Deities without Numbe
they worſhiped Stocks and Stones, Tre
Rivers, Bulls, Serpents, Monkeys and Garli
Both their Religion and their Gods were
the Prieſts making, and therefore we may
ſure they were hopeful ones. They crea
their Deities *after their own Likeneſs*; ang
cruel, covetous, and luſtful. Their Myſter
were full of Horror, Obſceneneſs, Craft, a
Deluſion. The Will of their God was ſearch
in the Guts and Ordure of dead Beaſts; and
Coop of Chickens were his Privy Counſello
His Favour or Diſpleaſure depended upon th
Craws; if they had puny Stomachs, the G
was in a Fit of the Spleen; if ravenous,
was in a giving Humour, and would grant y
any thing, even to the Cutting of the Thro
of a whole Army, or Burning of a City,
plundering a Province: And when he
tired of his Kindneſs to you, he would p
haps in a Day or two do all this for y
Enemy.

UPON the Whole, when Almighty God
veals his Will, he does it effectually;
when he diſguiſes it in dark and doubtful E
preſſions, it is plain, that the Time of ma
himſelf *further* known to Men, is not yet co
and it is in vain for them to pry into his Secrets.

T

THE all-merciful Being does never require
us, that which we cannot find he requires.
is not conſiſtent with his Wiſdom and Good-
ſs, to make that neceſſary which he hath
t made plain. He has, with the greateſt Per-
cuity, deſcribed the Candleſticks, Tongs, and
her Tools of Worſhip under the *Jewiſh*
aw; and yet in the Goſpel has not ſaid one
ord of ſome Doctrines, which we are told
e neceſſary to Salvation. Altars and Prieſts
e divinely appointed in the *Old Diſpenſation*,
t are neither directed nor deſcribed in the
ew; and yet we know of what Importance
ey are preſent in the *Popiſh Church* and
ewhere. The Prieſt's Office is particula-
zed and circumſcribed, even to the Killing
a Goat, or a Pair of Pigeons; and yet
der the Goſpel it is not ſo much as hinted,
t a Prieſt ſhall adminiſter either of the Sa-
aments; though, if we will take their own
ords for it, there can be no Sacrament
thout them. In the *Levitical* Law, the
ns of Levi are expreſly appointed to be
ieſts continually; but it is not once ſaid in
e Chriſtian Law, that there muſt be an un-
terrupted Race of Biſhops, or Popes, or
ieſts, to the End of the World; and that
ere can be no Church where it is not; tho',
this had been needful, it muſt have been

particularized. So eſſential a Part of the Chriſtian Religion, and ſo abſolutely neceſſary to every Man's Salvation, could never have been wholly omitted, or ſo much as left in Doubt.

As, by the Law of *Moſes*, the Prieſts Office and Duty were minutely deſcribed, ſo their Maintenance was aſcertained: But by the Law of Chriſt, there is not any Prieſthood at all appointed, (as I ſhall fully make out hereafter) and conſequently no certain Proviſion made for them. It is indeed ſaid, that *the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*; and I acknowledge it is fit, that thoſe who hire them ſhould pay them: But ſure this Text leaves every one at Liberty to chuſe his own *Labourer*, and to make as good a Bargain as he can, or to do his own Buſineſs himſelf. What Pretence is there of a Divine Right to juſt a Tenth Part; and not only of our Eſtates, but of our Stock and Induſtry too, which, in ſome Counties, comes to double the Rent that the Landlord receives?

THE Tribe of *Levi* amongſt the *Jews* were the Twelfth Tribe of *Iſrael*, and, in the Diviſion of the Lands, had a Right to the Twelfth Share, without any Regard had to their Prieſtly Office; and conſequently were allowed but a very ſmall Proportion toward their *Hire*, and much leſs, than, I doubt, their pre-

retended Succeſſors would be ſatisfied with. would therefore, as a ſincere Friend to their rder, recommend to their Conſideration, whe-er it would not be moſt adviſeable, to quit eir Divine Right, and be even content with e Laws of the Land.

G.

NUMBER X.

Wedneſday, March 23. 1720.

Of Ordination.

I Take Honeſty and Knowledge to be the eſſential Talents required for the Work of e Miniſtry: The one is acquired by Study, and e other depends upon the Diſpoſition of the eart, or the Grace of God. He therefore ho has the Capacity to teach and edify, has Right to do both.

THOSE who are Candidates for the Prieſt-ood, carry their Qualifications along with em; and having paſſed Examination, re-eive a Power from the Biſhop, which he re-

ceives from the Law, to put theſe Qualifica-
tions in Practice. But if, upon Trial, they be
found inſufficient, they are, or ought to be
rejected.

A PHYSICIAN does not receive from the Col-
lege an Ability to practiſe; but only a De-
claration that he already has it. Such a De-
claration, are *Holy Orders*: They convey no-
thing; neither Righteouſneſs, nor Learning,
nor Wiſdom. They are only a Diploma or
Privilege to exerciſe a certain Calling, during
good Behaviour. Any further than this, what
ſignifies the Hand of a Biſhop laid upon the
Head of a Stripling, who ſeeks Promotion or
a Livelihood? If that Hand puts any thing into
that Head, I would ask what it is, and how
does it appear? What Alteration for the better
is to be found in the Perſon, or Endowments,
or Spirit, of the Party ordained? How does
it appear, that he has any Moral Sufficiency
which he had not before? Or any Spiritual
Gift, beſides that which he carries home in his
Pocket; and which was *conferred* by the Bi-
ſhop's *Secretary*, for a *Fee*? Can there be any
new Ability or Character without ſome Mark
of it? Or is there an Alteration without a
Change? It is an inconceivable Myſtery
to me, that the *ſame Man* ſhould be *an-
other Man!* I have known many a Man's Pride
ſwell

ſwell, and his Morals decay, after Orders; but very ſeldom his Manners, or his Capacity, enriched by them. He who has the Spirit, will do the Works of the Spirit: *By their Fruits ye ſhall know them.* The Thing, were it true, is very capable of Proof. Indeed, it could not be hid nor diſputed. On the contrary, when neither the Heart is mended, nor the Underſtanding enlightened, it is manifeſt, that the Holy Ghoſt has nothing to do with either.

A LEARNED and virtuous Layman can inſtruct more effectually, and pray more devoutly and ſucceſsfully, than an ignorant and profane Prieſt; and is conſequently a more proper and ſecure Guide to others. To ſay that he has no Call, is no more than to ſay that he has not *entered his Name:* Beſides, it is falſe; for I will lay it down as a Propoſition, which I will abide by, that *he who has a Power to do Good, has a Call to do Good*; and the promoting of Virtue, and ſecuring of Souls, is doing the greateſt Good of all. St. *James* tells us, that *the effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*; but he does not ſay, that he muſt be *in Orders*, or that he muſt perform the ſame in a conſecrated Place: Though the Convocation, in the latter Part of the Queen's Reign, thought fit to differ with the Apoſtle in this Point.

APOLLOS, without any Call at all, but from his own Abilities, *being an eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures, and inſtructed in the Way of the Lord, and fervent in the Spirit, ſpake and taught diligently the Things of the Lord, and boldly in the Synagogue.* It is plain, that he had not the Holy Ghoſt, for that he *knew only the Baptiſm of* John: And it is alſo plain, that he was not *ordained*, unleſs it was by the Tent-maker and his Wife, *Aquila* and *Priſcilla: And they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the Way of God more perfectly.* (*Acts* xviii. 24, &c.)

I DOUBT the Holy Ghoſt is too often made free with in Popiſh Countries, upon the Occaſion of young Mens taking Orders. I believe it will be found, that their Motives are much more temporal. It is conſidered as a ſecular Employment, as much as any other; and the Labour of a Clergyman is as evidently bought and ſold, as that of an Attorney, or any Tradeſman. Beſides, the Way to this Calling is eaſy and obvious: Where is the Difficulty of learning a little *Greek*, or chopping a little Logic, and of getting by Heart a few Queſtions in School-Divinity? Nay, there are many ordained there, even without any of theſe momentous Accompliſhments.

THERE

THERE are ſome who take the Orders of Clergymen, and yet never exerciſe the Function of Clergymen, either through Idleneſs, or Weakneſs. Does the Holy Ghoſt call Men to the Work of the Miniſtry, not to do the Work of the Miniſtry? Or does he call Men to an Office, without giving them Gifts and Grace to perform it? It was not ſo in the Apoſtles Days, when God inſpired all whom he ſent; and where the Divine Commiſſion or Call was given, *a Door of Utterance* was alſo given. But there were then no *Sine-Cures*, no great Revenues; no great Doctors, nor ſmall Curates.

IT is evident, that neither the Church of *Rome* in general, nor any of its Biſhops in particular, believe a Word of this pretended Call of the Holy Ghoſt, in the Buſineſs of taking Orders. For, by the Canons, the Perſon demanding Ordination, is to be examined as to his Capacity for the Miniſtry, and muſt produce a Certificate as to the Innocence and Morality of his Life; both which were unneceſſary, if there was any Proof or Aſſurance of his Call from God. And the Queſtions asked him upon that Occaſion are ſuch as demand no more than ordinary human Aid to anſwer them. Nor is it at all expected of him, that the Goodneſs of his Life ſhould exceed

that of other Laymen: If it be as good, it is well.

WHENEVER the Holy Ghoſt was given, it was given upon ſome extraordinary Occaſion, for the doing of ſome extraordinary Action; as it was to the Apoſtles, for converting the Heathen World. *They* ſhewed the Power which they had, by the Wonders which they did; and gave effectual Evidences, that they were divinely aſſiſted. But ſome modern Prieſts, who have no extraordinary Work to do, aſſert, notwithſtanding, that they have an extraordinary Call from the Spirit; which would alſo infer his extraordinary Aſſiſtance. But they ſay it without ſhewing it, and pretend to it without proving it. It is a Happineſs, that we are not obliged to take their Word; for though Faith itſelf be *the Evidence of Things not ſeen*, yet ſtill it is the *Evidence*: that is, Proof muſt precede Belief.

WHEN the Popiſh Clergy are charged with Frailties, Vices, and Immoralities, they then confeſs the Truth, and are pleaſed to become Fleſh and Blood as well as other Men, and ſubject to the like Infirmities and Paſſions; if they ſaid *greater*, we could readily believe them. But when a Point of Gain or Dominion is to be contended for, they grow all of ſudden more than Men; they are then the

Lord's

Lord's Ambaſſadors, Succeſſors to the Epoſtles, a ſacred Society; and the Lord knows how many more fine Things. Now this Management is very unlucky for them, and full of palpable Contradiction; for if they had a greater Share of God's Grace and Spirit than others, it would be eſpecially evident in the ſuperior Piety of their Lives, ſince Holineſs is ſhewn in Practice: Whereas the Spirit of this World manifeſts itſelf in the Love of Power and Wealth; and hence thoſe who purſue them are called *Worldly-minded*, in Oppoſition to God's *Elect*, who are the *Spiritually-minded*. I need not recommend it to ſuch Clergy, which to chuſe, *carnal Minds* with Riches and Authority, or *Heavenly-mindedneſs* without them. It is certain, that the Apoſtles were *as pious as poor*.

IF, by the Call of the Holy Ghoſt, on this Occaſion, be meant no more than a ſerious and devout Bent of Mind to adminiſter in the public Worſhip of God, as ſome Reverend Divines, Lovers of Truth, do, I think, confeſs; then is the Claim of a Divine Miſſion, and ſucceſſive Right, utterly at an End; and the taking of Orders is no more, than taking a Licence to perform a religious Office; for which every religious intelligent Man is already qualified.

AND

AND indeed ſuch a Man is, without the Conſent of any Biſhop, intitled to be a Paſtor, in the Scripture Senſe of the Word, though not to receive the legal Wages of a Paſtor. He may preach and pray, and deliver the Sacrament, when temporal Laws do not reſtrain him, but cannot take Tithes, which are annexed to certain Conditions and Opinions eſtabliſhed by the State. As every State has its own Religion, ſo almoſt every Religion is directed and modelled by ſome State; and therefore they, who are Orthodox Conformiſts in one, are often Schiſmatical Diſſenters in another. But ſuch is the ſingular Modeſty and Submiſſion of the Clergy, that they, in moſt Countries, humbly acquieſce in the eſtabliſhed Faith; and not only meekly accept of all the Eccleſiaſtical Powers and Revenues to themſelves, but gratefully condeſcend to perſecute all thoſe Conſciences that are not as complaiſant and ſupple as their own. And indeed, it is but generous in them to be zealous for thoſe Notions and Ceremonies, which bring them Reverence and Hire: But, methinks, it is a little unreaſonable to expect, that others ſhould, without *their* Motives, adopt *their* Zeal.

P. *S.* HAVING in my laſt Paper aſſerted, that *there is no particular Prieſthood at all directed by the New Teſtament*; I am told, that

is from thence ſurmiſed by ſome, through Malice, and by others, through Miſtake, that I do by this inſinuate, that there is therefore no Occaſion for any Church-Miniſtry whatſoever, notwithſtanding my former Declarations upon this Head. I particularly ſay, in my Third Paper, ſpeaking of the Clergy:

"THEIR Office is evidently adapted to promote the Welfare of human Nature, and to propagate its Peace and Proſperity in this World, as well as its eternal Felicity in the next; ſo that it is the Intereſt of all Men to honour it: And none but a Madman will condemn and ridicule what has a manifeſt Tendency to the Security and Happineſs of all Mankind."

I SAY alſo in my Fourth Paper, that *I ſincerely think their Office to be abſolutely neceſſary to the Peace and Happineſs of Society.* I could likewiſe refer to other Paſſages. But to give full Satisfaction, once for all, to ſuch as will be ſatisfied, I declare, that I do only contend for the Right of every national and voluntary Society to appoint their own Paſtors, and to judge of their Doctrines and Behaviour: Further than this I have no Aim. Nor do I deſire to leſſen the Reſpect due to the Clergy from their Merit and Uſefulneſs; or the Dignities, Privileges, and Revenues, which they derive

derive from the Law, or from the Good-will and Contributions of the People. And I intend very ſoon to defend the Church of *England*, upon the Principles and Authority of the Scripture and the Law; as well as the Toleration granted to Diſſenters, by the ſame Law, and the ſame Scripture. G.

NUMBER XI.

Wedneſday, March 30. 1720.

The Advantageous Situation *of the* Clergy, *ſtrangely inconſiſtent with their common* Cry *of* Danger.

VIRTUE and Innocence were created naked and undiſguiſed; nor did our Firſt Parents cover themſelves till they had offended. Truth can never ſin, and therefore need not, and ought not, ever to appear in Maſquerade: She is moſt amiable, when moſt uncovered; and appears truly majeſtic, and in greateſt Luſtre, when diſrobed of all gaudy and affected Ornaments: Her natural Features want no Var-

niſh

niſh or Colouring, nor has ſhe any Need of Dreſſers and Tire-women.

KNAVERY and Deformity alone want Daubing and Diſguiſe. Actors do not care, that any one ſhould look into the Tiring-room, nor Jugglers or Sharpers into their Hands or Boxes; whereas Honeſty and Sincerity appear always barefaced, and ſhew themſelves moſt in open Day; they ſcorn all indirect Advantages, and borrowed Helps; but truſt alone to their own native Beauty, and intrinſic Strength: The Lion is never known to uſe Cunning.

I CONFESS, that I am not Maſter enough of my Temper, to avoid Laughter, and Indignation, by Turns, at the noiſy Clamours of the High Clergy, againſt the Freedom of the Age, and the Liberty of the Preſs; as if Virtue was inconſiſtent with good Senſe, or Truth could ſuffer by Knowledge, or Religion by a free and thorough Examination. What Figure would a grave Lawyer make in *Weſtminſter Hall*, if, after he had been tiring his Auditors for two Hours together, he ſhould deſire the Judges not to hear the Counſel of the other Side, leſt they ſhould perplex the Cauſe, and miſlead the Court?

EVERY Stander-by would take it for granted, that he was conſcious of the Weakneſs of his Client's Cauſe, and that it could no otherwiſe be

be defended, than by being not underſtood. This is, in Point, the Caſe of thoſe, who demand of all Mankind to be heard by the Clock, and will yet hear nobody; who talk and rail by Wholeſale, whilſt they cannot bear a ſingle Jeſt, or ludicrous Expreſſion; and who write Volumes by the Yard themſelves, and are in an Uproar, and outrageous, at a ſingle Half-ſheet of other Peoples.

How abſurd would it appear for an Army of an Hundred thouſand Men, intrenched up to the Ears, to call aloud for the Aſſiſtance of the Conſtable and Watch to defend their Camp againſt the Aſſaults and Storms of Highwaymen and Houſe-breakers! Juſt ſuch a Requeſt do the *Popiſh* Clergy abroad make, when they cry out, Fire, Fire! Help, Help! when they demand the Aſſiſtance of the Secular Power; and inſiſt, that no Sermons be preached, Books printed, or Harangues made, but their own. They have already more Advantages than Truth can deſire, and indeed enough to offend her Modeſty, and to make her aſhamed and bluſh; they are too well armed for a fair Adverſary, and yet are always complaining of the Shortneſs of their Weapons; and declaring themſelves overcome by calling out for more Help.

BESIDES the Piety and Example of their Lives, they are vaſtly numerous, and in Poſ-

ſeſſion

ſeſſion of great and various Dignities, of immenſe Revenues and Dependencies; are all bred up to Letters; have the Prejudices of the People, the ſole Education of Youth, the Fears as well as the Favours of the Fair Sex on their Side; and have the Weekly Opportunity of haranguing to the People upon their own Uſefulneſs and Importance: And they tell us too, that they have a ſole Right to the Scripture Prophecy, *That the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt them.*

CROWNED Heads always have thought it their Intereſt to keep Meaſures with them; Miniſters of State are not able to trick ſucceſſfully, and play the Knave, without their Leave and Aſſiſtance: They take Advantage, and make their Market, of all Factions and Diſturbances in States, and apply them to their own Benefit: Knaves ſhelter themſelves under their Protection; Hypocrites court and ſeem to admire them, and Bigots and Enthuſiaſts adore them. Every Event of Life contributes to their Intereſts: They Chriſten; they Educate; they Marry; they Church; they Bury; they Perſuade; they Frighten; they Govern; and ſcarce any thing is done without them. Notwithſtanding all this, they roar aloud, that they cannot keep their Ground, but that Contempt

tempt and Infidelity pour upon them like an Inundation.

IT is very remarkable, that the firſt Chriſtians were not only deſtitute of all the beforementioned Advantages, but their Enemies enjoyed them. They themſelves were perſecuted and contemned, buffetted, ridiculed and calumniated conſtantly in Books and Libels, publiſhed by the greateſt Philoſophers and Wits of the Heathen World. Yet Chriſtianity every Day ſpread far and wide, and made a wonderful Progreſs; inſomuch that, in an Age or two, Superſtition and Idolatry were driven from a great Part of the Earth.

A SPECULATION upon this Head, and an Inquiry into the Cauſes of ſo prodigious a Change, would be worthy the Endeavours of the brighteſt Wits and Genius's of our Age and Country, who undoubtedly muſt be found amongſt our own genuine Clergy. I have long wiſhed to ſee a Diſſertation upon this great and uſeful Subject; and with the greateſt Humility propoſe to the Conſideration of the Lower Houſe of Convocation at their next (ſo much deſired) Meeting, to give the World their Thoughts upon it, in a ſecond Repreſentation of the Cauſes of Vice and Infidelity. In Hopes to encourage them in ſo public an Undertaking, I intend before that happy Day to give them my poor

poor Aſſiſtance, and in ſome meaſure to alleviate their Labours, by endeavouring to prove, that no Part of this Misfortune ought to be laid at the Door of the Laity.

INDEED, it would be unbecoming the Reſpect and Reverence which I have always profeſſed, and hope ſhall always pay, to theſe Reverend Gentlemen, even to hint at any thing ſo improbable as the contrary Conjecture: For ſince human Nature is always the ſame, who can entertain ſo indecent a Thought of their Deſigns, or have ſuch a Contempt of their Performances, as to imagine, that Mankind can grow worſe under the Light of the Goſpel, in Defiance of their pious Lives and Examples; of the numerous Forms of public and private Prayer; of their conſtant Sermons, and godly Exhortations; of ſo many Creeds, Catechiſms, Syſtems, Commentaries, and whole Cart-loads of other ghoſtly Geer, which the World is every Day bleſſed with from the laborious Endeavours of above a Million of Eccleſiaſtics, or more; who have always, and do ſtill, coſt the People more than their whole Civil and Military Expence put together? Since, therefore, we may be ſure, that this great Change and Degeneracy cannot be owing to any remaining Defect amongſt the Laity, it may well be expected from Perſons of their Penetration and Perſpicuity,

to

to let us into the true Cauſes of ſo ſurpriſing a Phænomenon.

IN the mean time, (though with all the due Submiſſion of an humble Votary) I ſhall for once preſume to adviſe them, not to level ſo many Batteries againſt good Senſe, and human Reaſon, which are impregnably fortified and ſecure againſt the fierceſt Aſſaults. A great Philoſopher tells us, *when Reaſon is againſt a Man, a Man will be againſt Reaſon.* I therefore much fear, if theſe my Friends and Patrons ſhould continue to hold forth, and exert their Eloquence, againſt private Judgment, Freedom of Inquiry, and a daily and diligent Search after a religious Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, that the World may miſtake their Endeavours, and imagine that all theſe good Things make againſt them; and yet unfortunately they are in ſuch Repute, that there are little Hopes of depreciating or putting them out of Countenance.

BESIDES, I humbly conceive it to be impolitic upon other Accounts too. It appears to me to be very indiſcreet in Perſons *Militant*, to endeavour to put an End to a War, which, for the moſt part, puts an End to themſelves, and their own Pay. A jovial Country Parſon, once, in a merry Mood, paſſing by a Waggon which was overturned, told the Carter, That he had

had killed the Devil; to which the profane Wretch replied, That he was glad of it with all his Heart, *becauſe then*, quoth *Ralph*, *I have ſpoiled your Trade*. A Word to the Wiſe is ſufficient.

METHINKS alſo, it ſhould be doing too much Credit to his *Satanic Majeſty*, to ſuppoſe him more than a Match for a Million of conſecrated Perſons, with all their Hierarchical Powers, and, as they ſay, Divine Aſſiſtances about them.

T.

NUMBER XII.

Wednesday, April 6. 1720.

The Enmity *of the* High Clergy *to the* Reformation, *and their* Arts *to* Defeat *the* End *of it.*

MACHIAVEL adviſes any one, who would change the Conſtitution of a State, to keep as much as poſſible to the old Forms; for then the People, ſeeing the ſame Officers, the ſame Formalities, Courts of Juſtice, and other outward Appearances, are inſenſible of the Alteration, and believe themſelves in Poſſeſſion of their old Government.

THUS *Cæſar*, when he ſeized the *Roman Liberties*, cauſed himſelf to be choſen *Dictator*, (which was an antient Office) continued the Senate, the Conſuls, the Tribunes, the Cenſors, and all other Powers of the Commonwealth; and yet changed *Rome* from the moſt free, to the moſt tyrannical Government in the World.

THIS

THIS Policy is yet more neceſſary to be obſerved in altering the Religion of a Country; for very few Perſons, of any Sect or Party in Faith, are converſant with the Speculations or diſtinguiſhing Tenets of their own Church, or ſo much as know what they are.

WHILST they ſee the ſame broad-brimmed Hats, Bands, Caſſocks, and long Gowns; and hear the ſame Pſalms ſung in the ſame Tone, and in the ſame faſhioned Buildings; they think that they have the ſame Religion, and will be angry with any one who ſhall tell them the contrary.

BUT if the Ceremonies or other Forms of Religious Worſhip are to be altered too, the change muſt be made inſenſibly, and by Degrees, that the Difference may be unobſerved, and thought of no Conſequence; and all Advantages muſt be taken of Revolutions in Government, of public Calamities, and of Factions, when they beat high, and are ready to fall into any Meaſures to oppoſe and mortify each other.

THE Prieſthood in all Ages have made theſe Arts, and a Thouſand others, contribute to their Greatneſs; the High-Church Jacobite Clergy of *England* have put them all in Practice to regain every thing which they loſt at the *Reformation*; and if they could but have prevailed upon their Flocks to have followed

them, they had long ago ſold them again in the *Roman* Market: But ſince we of the Laity are ſo refractory, and hang backward, they now ſeem reſolved to gallop away by themſelves, and leave us to come our own Pace after; inſomuch that a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, as by Law eſtabliſhed, is at preſent, become, I am far from ſaying an uncommon, I am ſure I may ſay, a moſt agreeable Sight, and many of his Brethren treat him as a Monſter.

IT muſt be evident to any one, who has read our Eccleſiaſtical Story, that the *Reformation* in *England* was carried on, not only without, but againſt the Conſent of the whole Body of the Clergy, (very few excepted) who always oppoſed every Step towards their own Amendment: It was, indeed, every-where, properly ſpeaking, an Effort or Inſurrection of the Laity, againſt the Pride and Oppreſſion of the Prieſts, who had cheated them of their Eſtates, impoſed upon their Conſciences, debauched their Wives, and were ever inſulting Perſons.

THE poor injured People had long felt the Malady, but were ſo intimidated by their own Superſtition, and the over-grown Power of their haughty Maſters, that they durſt not think of a Remedy, till a bold and diſoblig-

Frier or Two diſſolved the Inchantment; and hen the whole Chriſtian World ſeemed to riſe t once againſt this Fairy and Fantaſtical Emire.

BUT People long uſed to Servitude, knowg not what Freedom is, or how to preſerve it hen thrown into their Laps, have always reurſe to ſome Leaders, of whoſe Honeſty and eater Wiſdom they have conceived an Opion; and theſe for the moſt part abuſe ſuch onfidence, to advance their own Views of ealth and Power.

So it happened in this Caſe; and conſeently the *Reformation* went partially on, acrding to the Direction under which it fell. here Prieſts were at the Head of it, they atmpted only to make it a Reformation of unds and Diſtinctions: They took no Ofce at the Riches and Grandeur of the Clergy, hich was the Source of all other Evils) but re angry, that they had not their Share of m; and ſo looked upon the Revolt only as Means to aggrandize themſelves: They conned not the Tyranny, but the Tyrants; attempted to uſurp that Power in their own ſons, which they loudly exclaimed againſt he *Romiſh* Prieſthood: Moſt Sects of them derfully well agreed, that there was a Di- Right in the Clergy to dictate to the

Laity in Religious Matters; but every Sect claimed that Power to themſelves, independent of all others.

THEY could not agree about ſharing the Prey, but each would have had the Whole; which had this good Effect, however, that they were all obliged to abate much of their Pretenſions, in order to engage Cuſtomers; and I thank God, they have not yet been able to raiſe the Price again to the old Market; though to do them Juſtice, they are no ways anſwerable to their Succeſſors, for having let ſlip any Opportunity to that Purpoſe.

BUT whilſt they were thus carrying on their Project for Dominion, they found it neceſſary to throw out a Barrel to the Whale, and keep the People's Minds buſied, and their Paſſions afloat, with Metaphyſical Subtilties and Diſtinctions, of no Uſe to true Religion and Morality, though very conducive to their own ambitious tyrannical Deſigns.

I WOULD gladly know, from theſe Reverend Venders of Trifles, Whether it would have been worth the Thouſandth Part of the Combuſtion which has been made, or the Blood which has been ſpilt, only to have ſettled a few Speculations, if they could have been ſettled? Pray where is the eſſential Difference between *Tranſubſtantiation*, *Conſubſtantiation*, and the *Real Preſence*

Preſence? What the Conſequence, whether a Child be baptized by one ſort of Prieſts, or by another? Or of what Uſe to Mankind are the abſtruſe Queſtions about *Predeſtination*, *Free-Will*, or *Free-Grace*? What is the Difference, as to the Duties or Ordinances of Chriſtianity, if they be adminiſtred under the Direction of a ſingle Perſon, a Bench of Biſhops, or a Lower Houſe of Convocation, or none of them all, ſo they be piouſly adminiſtred? Or whether the chimerical Line of Succeſſion be broken, or ever had a Being?

SINCE 'tis agreed amongſt all our preſent Sects of Chriſtians, that the Saviour of the World is the Son of God, deſcended from Heaven to teach Virtue and Goodneſs to Men, and to die for our Redemption; how are we concerned in the Scholaſtic Notions of the *Trinity*? Will the Scripture be more regarded, or the Precepts of it be better obſerved, if the Three Perſons are believed to be Three Divine diſtinct Spirits and Minds, who are ſo many real ſubſiſting Perſons? Whether the Son and Holy Ghoſt are Omnipotent of themſelves, or are ſubordinate, and dependent on the Father? Or, if they are independent, whether their Union conſiſt in a mutual Conſciouſneſs of one another's Thoughts and Deſigns, or in any thing elſe? Whether they are Three At-

tributes of God, *viz.* Goodneſs, Wiſdom and Power? Or Three internal Acts, *viz.* Creation, Redemption and Sanctification? Or Two internal Acts of the One ſubſiſting Perſon of the Father; that is to ſay, the Father underſtanding and willing himſelf and his own Perfections? Or Three internal Relations, namely, the Divine Subſtance and Godhead conſidered as Unbegotten, Begotten, and Proceeding? Or Three Names of God aſcribed to him in Holy Scripture, as he is Father of all Things, as he did inhabit in an extraordinary Manner in the Man Jeſus Chriſt, and as he effected every thing by his Spirit, or his Energy and Power? Or laſtly, Whether the Three Perſons are only Three Beings, but what ſort of Beings we neither know, nor ought to pretend to know? which I take to be the Trinity of the Mob, as well as of ſome other wiſer Heads.

As far as I can remember, theſe are the important Queſtions which have ſet Mankind together by the Ears, for ſo many Ages; and it ſeems are yet thought of Conſequence enough to create new Feuds, and mortal Dudgeon, amongſt all our Sects of Eccleſiaſtics. But why muſt we of the Laity quarrel about them too? What have Beaux and Belles, old Women, Coblers, and Milk-Maids, to do with *Homo-ouſios*, *Conſubſtantiality*, *Perſonality*, *Hy-*

poſtatics

ſtatical Union, *Infinite Satisfaction*, &c.? none of which hard Words, or any like them, are to be found in Scripture; and therefore, I think, we may even return them to *Rome*, that being the Place from whence they came, and be contented to be good Chriſtians without them.

WE ought to ſhew our Faith and Obedience to God, by a chearful Submiſſion to his Commands, and not affect a vain Curioſity of prying into his Secrets; pretend to philoſophize upon his abſtracted Nature and Eſſence; and, with our limited and corrupt Underſtandings, preſume to comprehend infinite Wiſdom and Power, and define the Modus of its Exiſtence and Operations. Almighty God would not make himſelf farther known even to *Moſes*, nor ſuffer himſelf to be otherwiſe deſcribed to the Children of *Iſrael*, (though to get them out of the Land of Bondage) than by the comprehenſive Words, *I am that I am*; which methinks might baffle our officious Impertinence, and put us in mind of the Danger of peeping into the Ark.

THE above Diſputes make us neither wiſer nor better. Men are not intended for Speculation; exceeding few are capable of it. The Faculties of our Minds, as well as the Frame of our Bodies, are adapted to Labour, and to

ſupply the Exigencies of our Nature. We are formed for Society and mutual Help, and the Goodneſs of God has implanted in us Qualities ſuited to theſe Ends; he has, beſides, given us Precepts for our Aſſiſtance, and annexed infinite Rewards to the Obſervance of them. We know how to be good Parents, good Children, good Neighbours, and good Subjects: But how ſmall a Part of Mankind underſtand, or are capable of underſtanding, Metaphyſical Queſtions! When they uſe the Terms, it is plain, that they have no Ideas annexed to them, but fight at Blind-man's-buff, and quarrel about what none of them underſtand. It is evident therefore, that the All-wiſe Providence could not intend to perplex and confound weak Minds with ſuch Subtilties, for the Knowledge of which he has not given them ſuitable Qualifications.

T.

NUMBER XIII.

Wedneſday, April 20. 1720.

The Church *proved a Creature of the* Civil Power, *by Acts of Parliament, and the Oaths of the Clergy.*

I HAVE obſerved, in my laſt Paper, that many of the Proteſtant Prieſts endeavoured to divert the growing Spirit in the Chriſtian World for Reformation, to metaphyſical and uſeleſs Speculations, of no Benefit to the preſent or eternal Happineſs of Mankind, whilſt they were ſeating themſelves at leiſure in the Chairs of their Predeceſſors.

BUT far otherwiſe was it, where it fell under the Direction of Laymen; who conſidered it as an Opportunity put by Heaven into their Hands, to free themſelves from the Uſurpations, and unjuſt Domination, of the Prieſthood. They made no Scruple (notwithſtand-

ing the loud Cry of Sacrilege) to ſeize, and apply to public Uſes, a great Part of thoſe Riches, which the Clergy had extorted from old Women, and ſuperſtitious and inchanted Bigots; the Compoſitions for Murders, for public and private Robberies; the Plunder of dying and deſpairing Sinners; and the Supports of their own Idleneſs, Pride, Ignorance, and Debauchery.

A BOLD and honeſt Phyſician (whoſe Name was *Eraſtus*) at this time ſtarted up, and told the World, that all theſe Squabbles of the Clergy about their own Power, were Diſputes *de lana caprina*, (concerning a Non-Entity) and that none of them had any Right to what they almoſt all claimed: That the Quarrel amongſt them was only which of them ſhould oppreſs the Laity, who were independent of them all; for that their Miniſters were their Servants, Creatures of their own making, and not of God Almighty's. He ſhewed them from Reaſon and Scripture, that every State had the ſame Authority of modelling their Eccleſiaſtical as Civil Government; that the Goſpel gave no Pre-eminence or Authority to Chriſtians over one another, but every Man alike (who had ſuitable Abilities) was qualified to execute all the Duties and Offices of their moſt holy Religion; and that it was only a Matter of Prudence and Conve-

Convenience to appoint particular Perſons to officiate for the reſt, with proper Rewards and Encouragements; which Perſons would be intitled to no more Power than they themſelves gave them.

THIS Doctrine, as little as it pleaſed the Clergy, yet prevailed ſo far with the Laity, that moſt Proteſtant States modelled their Eccleſiaſtical Polity according to their own Inclinations or Intereſts; and particularly, in *England*, the whole Reformation was built upon this Principle, which ever, till lately, was eſteemed the great Characteriſtic of the Church of *England*; and therefore 'tis the laſt Degree of Prieſtly Inſolence for a Body of Men to call themſelves the only true Churchmen, at the ſame time that they deny, and every-where exclaim againſt, the fundamental and eſſential Article which diſtinguiſhes it from moſt other Churches, and particularly from Presbytery; for as to the reſt of the Articles, the *Calviniſts* are more Orthodox than the Churchmen themſelves.

AT the very Beginning of the *Reformation*, the Clergy here in *England*, conſcious of their own Enormities, and the juſt Vengeance which hung over their Heads, were contented to diſgorge their ill-gotten, and as ill-uſed Power; and, in full Convocation, threw themſelves

upon the King's Mercy, acknowledging his Supremacy in the fulleſt and moſt ſignificant Words; and promiſed in *verbo ſacerdotii*, that for the future they would never preſume to attempt, alledge, claim, or put in Uſe, enact, or promulgate any Canons, Conſtitutions, or Ordinances, without the King's moſt Royal Licence and Aſſent had thereunto; and humbly beſought his Majeſty to appoint Thirty-two Perſons, half Clergy and half Laity, to examine the Canons and Conſtitutions in being, and to abrogate and confirm them, as they ſhould think good.

THIS Petition was changed into an Act of Parliament by the 25th of *Henry* the VIIIth *Cap.* 19. But it is there declared, That the Crown and Convocation together ſhall not put in Execution any Canons, Conſtitutions, or Ordinances, which ſhall be contrariant or repugnant to the King's Prerogative, or the Laws of the Kingdom: The ſame Statute alſo gives an Appeal from the ſupreme Eccleſiaſtical Court, to the King's Commiſſion.

IN the ſame Seſſion of Parliament, the Manner of Proceeding upon the *Congé d' Elire* is directed; *viz.* * A Licence from the Crown is to be ſent to the Chapter, to chuſe or elect an Archbiſhop or Biſhop, and a Letter miſſive

* 25 *Hen.* VIII. *Cap.* 20.

with

with it, to nominate the Perſon whom they are to chuſe; which if they do not obey, nor ſignify the ſame, according to the Tenor of the Act, within twenty Days, they are ſubjected to a Præmunire; and if the Election be not made within Twelve Days, the King may nominate a Biſhop by Letters Patents, without any Election at all, as is now done in *Ireland*, and formerly was ſo in *Scotland*, where their Biſhops were *durante beneplacito*.

THE next Year the Parliament *, reciting, That the King juſtly and rightly is, and ought to be, ſupreme Head of the Church of *England*, enact the ſame; and that he ſhall have full Power to viſit, redreſs, reform, correct, and reſtrain all Errors, Hereſies, Abuſes, Offences, Contempts, and Enormities, whatſoever they be, which, by any manner of ſpiritual Authority or Juriſdiction, ought or may be reformed, redreſſed, *&c.*

AFTERWARDS, in the 37th Year of the ſame Reign, the Parliament, reciting, That the Biſhop of *Rome*, and his Adherents, minding utterly to aboliſh, obſcure, and delete the Power given by God to the Princes of the Earth, whereby they might get and gather to themſelves the Rule and Government of the World, had decreed, that no Layman might exerciſe

* 26 *Hen.* VIII. *Cap.* 1.

Eccle-

Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, leſt their falſe and uſurped Power, which they pretended to have in Chriſt's Church, might decay, wax vile, and be of no Reputation (which Power they affirm to be contrary to the Word of God, and to his Majeſty's moſt high Prerogative); and reciteing alſo, That Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Archdeacons, and other Eccleſiaſtical Perſons, have no manner of Juriſdiction Eccleſiaſtical, but by, from, and under the King's Majeſty; enact, That Laymen qualified as the Law appoints, may exerciſe all Parts of Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, and all Cenſures and Coercions appertaining, or in any wiſe belonging thereunto.

THE 2d and 3d of *Edward* the Sixth, *Cap.* 1. enacts the Common-Prayer Book, (which was before compiled and drawn up the King's Authority) and makes it a Law.

THE 3d and 4th of *Edward* the Sixth, *Cap.* 12. appoints ſuch Form and Manner of making and conſecrating Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons, and other Miniſters of the Church, as by Six Prelates, and Six other Men of this Realm, by the King to be appointed and aſſigned, or by the greater Number of them, ſhall be deviſed, *&c.* and *none other*. Theſe two Acts were confirmed with ſome Alterations, in the 5th and 6th Year of this Reign.

THE

THE 1ſt of Queen *Elizabeth*, *Cap.* 1. eſtabliſhes and enacts, That all Juriſdictions, Privileges, Superiorities, and Pre-eminences, Spiritual and Eccleſiaſtical, at any Time lawfully uſed or exerciſed, for the Viſitation of the Eccleſiaſtical State or Perſons, and for the Reformation, Order, and Correction of the ſame, and of all manner of Errors, Hereſies, Schiſms, Abuſes, Contempts, Offences, and Enormities, ſhall be annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm; and gives Power and Authority to it to appoint any Perſons, being natural-born Subjects, to exerciſe all ſorts of Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction; and declares at the ſame time *what*, and *what only*, ſhall be deemed *Hereſy*.

THE Oath of Supremacy (which is an Aſſent to theſe Laws, and obliges thoſe who take it, to aſſiſt and defend them) is appointed in this Act; which Oath all Eccleſiaſtical Perſons, as well as any others, who ſhall be promoted and preferred to any Degree or Order in the Univerſity, are to take under ſevere Penalties.

THE 8th of Queen *Elizabeth*, reciting, That the Queen had in her Order and Diſpoſition, all Juriſdiction, Power, and Authority, Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil; and had cauſed divers Archbiſhops and Biſhops to be *duly* elected and conſecrated; does confirm all the ſaid Elections and Conſecrations; as alſo the Common-

Prayer

Prayer Book, and the Orders and Forms for the making of Prieſts, Deacons, and Miniſters, which were added to it in the Fifth and Sixth Years of *Edward* the Sixth.

ALL which before-mentioned Acts are now in being, in full Force, and ſworn to by all the Clergy, who are ſubjected to a Præmunire, if they contradict them.

THUS our Parliaments, at or juſt after the *Reformation*, whilſt the Memory of Sacerdotal Oppreſſions continued in their Minds, were reſolved to pare their Claws, curb their Inſolence, and not leave it in their Power to corrupt Religion any more; and therefore put it under the Care of the Civil Magiſtrate, who could ſeldom have any Intereſt in perverting it: Whereas there is not any Inſtance, where, when it has been left to the Conduct of any Set of Eccleſiaſtics whatſoever, they have not abuſed and ſacrificed it to the Advancement of their own Wealth and Power.

EVEN *Aaron* himſelf, (though a High-Prieſt of God's own Appointment) when *Moſes*, the *Civil Magiſtrate*, was but a little while abſent, to receive the Almighty's Commands, cheated the *Iſraelites* of their Ear-rings, melted them into a Golden Calf, and encouraged the Dupes to ſay, *Theſe were the Gods which brought them out of the Land of* Egypt. He built an Altar before

before his Idol, proclaimed a Faſt, and then made uſe of all this Deceit to extort from that ſtupid and ſuperſtitious People, Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings. This provoked Almighty God to that degree, *that his Wrath was kindled againſt the whole Nation, and he was inclined to conſume all, till* Moſes, *the* Lay-Sovereign, *turned his fierce Wrath by his Prayers, and by remembring him of the Oath he ſware to* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *namely, that he would multiply their Seed like the Stars in Heaven*, &c. And then it is true, that *the Lord repented of the Evil which he thought to do unto them:* But no Thanks to the Prieſt, who had drawn them into this Scrape. *Exod.* Chap. xxxii.

T.

NUMBER XIV.

Wedneſday, April 20. 1720.

The Clergy *proved to be Creatures of the* Civil Power, *by the* Canons, *and their own public Acts.*

IN my laſt Diſcourſe, I have ſhewn what is meant by the Supremacy of the Crown of *England*; by virtue of which, our Kings ſometimes with, and ſometimes without their Parliaments, have governed and modelled the Eccleſiaſtical State, ever ſince the *Reformation*. Biſhops, as well as inferior Clergymen, have been often ſuſpended and deprived by the *King's Authority*; and, in the Inſtance of Archbiſhop *Abbot*, for his Pleaſure. The *Popiſh* Biſhops were all deprived by *Queen Elizabeth*, and ſome Thouſands of the Parochial Clergy were ejected by the *Act of Uniformity*; and many alſo of all Orders were deprived at the *Revolution*.

I SHALL

I SHALL now proceed to ſhew what have been the Opinions and Practice of the whole Body of Eccleſiaſtics, ſince the making of theſe Laws; in doing which, I ſhall take notice only of their public and authentic Acts: For as to the Whimſies of private Doctors, I think them of ſo little Weight, that I ſhall be aſhamed to quote them on either ſide of the Queſtion.

UPON the Clergy's owning the King Head of the Church at the *Reformation*, all the Biſhops took out Commiſſions for the exerciſing their Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction; which were renewed again upon his Son's coming to the Throne. In theſe Commiſſions, all Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction is owned to proceed from the Crown, as from a ſupreme Head, and Fountain, and Spring of all Magiſtracy in the Kingdom; and they acknowledge, that they executed it formerly only *ex precario*, and that now with grateful Minds they accepted the Favour from the King's Liberality and Indulgence; and would be always ready to yield it up again, when his Majeſty pleaſed to require it.

THESE Commiſſions recited, amongſt other Particulars of Spiritual Power, That of Ordaining Presbyters, and of Eccleſiaſtical Correction.

THE

THE 2d Canon excommunicates every one who ſhall endeavour to hurt or extenuate the King's Authority in Eccleſiaſtical Caſes, as it is ſettled by the Laws of the Kingdom; and declares he ſhall not be reſtored till he has publicly recanted ſuch *impious Errors*.

THE 37th Canon obliges all Perſons, to their utmoſt, to keep and obſerve all and every one of the Statutes and Laws made for reſtoring to the Crown, the antient Juriſdiction it had over the Eccleſiaſtical State.

THE 12th of King *James*'s Canons declares, That whoever ſhall affirm, that it is lawful for the Order either of Miniſters or Laics to make Canons, Decrees, or Conſtitutions in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, without the King's Authority, and ſubmits himſelf to be governed by them, is, *ipſo facto*, excommunicated, and is not to be abſolved before he has publicly repented and renounced theſe *Anabaptiſtical Errors*.

ARCHBISHOP *Bancroft*, when, at the Head of all the Biſhops in *England*, he delivered Articles to King *James* againſt the Secular Courts, for encroaching upon the Eccleſiaſtical, owns, that all Juriſdictions, Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil, are annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm, as may be read more at large in the Lord *Coke*'s *Third Inſtitute*; which I would recommend

recommend to the Peruſal of every one, as a Specimen of the Difference between Eccleſiaſtics and Laymen.

I SHALL think it neceſſary only here to add, that the Clergy have never preſumed, by any public Act, directly to controvert this Prerogative, or indeed even to nibble at it, unleſs in one Inſtance during the laſt Reign; which the Queen reſented highly, and let the Convocation know, by a Letter to the Archbiſhop, that *ſhe was reſolved to maintain her Supremacy, as a Fundamental Part of the Conſtitution of the Church of* England.

THIS is the Supremacy of the Crown; theſe are the genuine Principles of the Church of *England*; which whoever denies, may be a *Papiſt*, a *Presbyterian*, a *Muggletonian*, a *Fifth-Monarchy Man*, or any thing elſe, beſides a Member of our Communion. This Doctrine, and theſe Opinions, have been acknowledged and ſworn to by every Eccleſiaſtic ſince the *Reformation*; and we daily ſee they are All ready to ſwear them over again upon any freſh Motives of Advantage; and ſure no one will ſuggeſt, that the Whole Clergy of *England* have lived in the State of Perjury for near Two hundred Years: I am ſure, if this be the Caſe, it is not their Intereſt to let us know it, ſince

ſince their Authority muſt be of very little Weight in any thing elſe.

WE have it here upon Oath, that all Juriſdiction, Power and Authority, Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical, of what Kind or Sort ſoever it be, does flow from, and is derived from, the King's Majeſty; and I readily allow them to have all the reſt by Divine Right. They have been always very happy at Diſtinctions and Diſcoveries; and therefore if they can find out any Power or Authority, which is of *no Kind or Sort whatſoever*, I think they ought to have it for their Pains; I wiſh them much Joy with it; and ſhall own it always to be Sacrilege in any one who ſhall attempt to take it from them: but, if there be any ſuch Thing, it is plain, that it belongs to them as Governors of the Inviſible Church, and is of a Nature which we know nothing of.

FOR it is certain, that Archbiſhops and Biſhops are Creatures of the Civil Power, and derive their Being and Exiſtence from it. They are choſen by the Direction of one Act of Parliament, and ordained and conſecrated according to a Model preſcribed by another; in which thoſe who officiate, act only miniſterially; and all other Methods of chuſing them which the Clergy can deviſe, are declared void and ineffectual, and will not convey

ey any Spiritual Power at all: Nor, I dare ſay, will any Clergyman in *England* pay Submiſſion o ſuch a Choice, if he do not like the Man; or if he do, provided he thinks, that he ſhall ſe any thing by it. If the Biſhops have no Power but what they derive from the Crown, hey can convey none but of the ſame ſort to he Inferior Clergy.

I DURST not have ſtood the Imputation of Calumny, in charging any of the preſent Clergy with Principles or Practices ſo directly in Defiance f theſe glaring and notorious Declarations of he whole Body, as well as their own repeated Oaths and Subſcriptions, if I had not the Authority of the brighteſt Luminary of the preſent Church and Age (our great Metropolitan) to ear me out, who aſſures us in his *Appeal*, "That a new Sort of Diſciplinarians are ariſen up from amongſt ourſelves, who ſeem to comply with the Government of the Church, much upon the ſame Account as others do with that of the State; not out of Conſcience to their Duty, or any Love they have for it, but becauſe it is the Eſtabliſhed Church, and they cannot keep their Preferments without it: They hate our Conſtitution, and All who ſtand up in good earneſt for it; but for all that, they hold faſt to it; and ſo go on to ſubſcribe and rail.."

To

To theſe wild and enthuſiaſtic Notions we owe the preſent Diſaffection; and moſt, if not all the Calamities and public Diſturbances that have happened ſince the *Revolution*; and yet (which is amazing to think of) they have prevailed ſo far amongſt the corrupt Part of the Eccleſiaſtics, that I wiſh we could find more even of the Low-Church Clergymen, who dare thoroughly to renounce theſe *Impious and Anabaptiſtical Errors*, as their own Canons call them.

DOMINION! Dominion is the loud Cry; which, as it has already produced all the Cruelties and Abſurdities of Popery, ſo it is ſtill teeming with, or bringing forth, new Monſters; and what other Iſſue can be expected from ſo unnatural a Copulation as that of the Chriſtian Prieſthood with worldly Power?

To this we are beholden for all the Corruptions and Fopperies brought into religious Worſhip, as well as the ill-ſhapen and ungainly Brats of Paſſive Obedience; the Divine Right of Kings and Biſhops; the uninterrupted Succeſſion; the Prieſts Power of the Keys; of Binding and Looſing; Remitting and Retaining Sins; the Real Preſence in the Sacrament; the Altar and Unbloody Sacrifice upon it; the giving the Holy Ghoſt; of Excommunication as laid Claim to; and Conſecration of Churches

nd Church-yards; the Reconciliation of God's nowing what we ſhall do, with a Power in us ot to do it; of Perſecution for Opinions, and e Tritheiſtical Charity; with a long Train of onkiſh Fooleries beſides: All, or any Part of hich, could never have entered into the Heart one Layman, or Clergyman either, if nothing d been to be got by them.

T.

NUMBER XV.

Wedneſday, April 27. 1720.

e Abſurdity *and* Impoſſibility *of* Church-Power, *as independent on the* State.

HAVE ſhewn, in my laſt Two Diſcourſes, that the Clergy of *England* have no Juriſ-ion, Power, or Authority whatſoever, which ot derived mediately or immediately from Legiſlature; and that they have all ſworn

to this Principle: I now own myſelf ſo much concerned for their Reputation, that I will even run the Hazard of incurring the Diſpleaſure of ſome of them, by proving, that they have taken true Oaths, and that it is impoſſible to conſtitute a Proteſtant National Church upon any other Foundation.

I INTEND to ſhew, in the Courſe of these Papers, that there is not the leaſt Colour or Pretence for the chimerical Diſtinction of Eccleſiaſtical and Civil, in any other Senſe than as the Words *Maritime* and *Military* are uſed to denote different Branches of the executive Power: For, take away the legal Eſtabliſhment, and the Clergy can have no Power at all, but what flows from the Conſent of voluntary Societies; a Propoſition which I undertake hereafter demonſtratively to make out; and I defy all the Eccleſiaſtics in the World, united together, to take one Step towards proving the contrary, without plunging themſelves in everlaſting Nonſenſe and Abſurdity.

BUT to keep them a little in good Humour, I will ſuppoſe, for the preſent, that their whole Hypotheſis is true; and that our Saviour, whilſt upon Earth, (even againſt his own Declarations) had Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction over the whole Earth: That he gave it the Apoſtles; that they conveyed it on to their Suc-

ceſſors; and that the Church of *Rome*, and the preſent Clergy of the Church of *England*, *as by Law eſtabliſhed*, are their undoubted Succeſſors: Nay, I will be ſo civil as not to ask one Queſtion, what ſort of Power that was; but take it for granted, that it was worldly Authority, and ought to be rewarded and ſupported by worldly Equipage, Wealth, and Titles; and if they have any thing more to ask of me, I will grant that too, and then examine what Uſe can be made of theſe Conceſſions to the preſent Purpoſe.

I DESIRE firſt to be informed, from whence they will fetch their Eccleſiaſtical Heraldry of Archbiſhops, Dioceſan Biſhops, Deans, Chapters, Arch-deacons, the new Office of Deacons, Officials, Commiſſaries, the Two Houſes of Convocation with co-ordinate Powers, Eccleſiaſtical Courts, Pariſh Prieſts, and Curates, with the whole Train of inferior Machines, and Spiritual Under-ſtrappers. Here I doubt all their Texts, all their Schemes, will fail them; for very few of theſe hard Names will be found even in their own Tranſlations of the Bible, and there y muſt have recourſe to Human Authority at laſt.

IF they ſay, (as I ſuſpect they will) that the Government of the Church being conveyed down to the Biſhops from the Apoſtles, they

must have all Power which is neceſſary to it; and conſequently have a Right to appoint Courts of Judicature, and Eccleſiaſtical Officers, as alſo to give them proper Powers to anſwer the Ends of their Truſt:

I WOULD then ask them, whether this great Epiſcopal Authority is given to every Biſhop independent of all the reſt; to all the Biſhops of the whole Church every-where diſperſed agreeing together; to the Majority of the Whole; or to the Majority of any Number of them meeting in one Place, either by Conſent, Accident, or the Appointment of Princes or States? For, I think, it muſt be agreed by all the World, that if the Biſhops had any Power from God, which is independent of the Civil Sovereign, he cannot reſtrain, model, or limit it; and that any accidental Alterations of the Bounds of Dominions, either from Conqueſt, Chance or Conſent, can no way affect the Divine Authority, or hinder its Operation.

IF every Biſhop has this whole Power delegated to him from God; then by what Authority can the Exerciſe of it be afterwards reſtrained to a particular Diſtrict or Diocese, ſo as to make his Actions out of it, not only *invalid*, but *ſchiſmatical* and criminal? Who can limit a Power given by the Almighty? Not the Civil Sovereign, who has nothing to do

another Juriſdiction; nor the Biſhop himſelf, who muſt accept it upon the Terms which God has given it.

IT cannot be ſuppoſed, that he receives it for his own Sake, but as a Truſt for the Benefit of Chriſtianity; and it muſt be the higheſt Breach of this great Truſt, not to diſcharge it perſonally, but to divide it with others, of whoſe Honeſty he can have no ſufficient Knowledge.

BESIDES, when theſe Biſhops differ with one another, (which will happen as often as they have different Complexions, Intereſts, or Underſtandings) what muſt the Chriſtian World then do? Muſt they follow the Biſhop of *Bangor* *, or the Abbot of *Weſtminſter* †? Or ſuſpend their Chriſtianity till they are all agreed? A ſolid Rock truly to build God's Church upon!

So great a Body of Men as the whole Chriſtian Church, or the Majority of them, never did or could meet together; and if ſuch a Thing were poſſible, they would only ſcold or fight; and therefore any one may with great Modeſty affirm, that no Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment now in the World did or could take its Riſe from ſuch an Aſſembly.

* Dr. *Benjamin Headley*, now Biſhop of *Wincheſter*.
† Dr. *Francis Atterbury*, late Biſhop of *Rocheſter*, and Dean of *Weſtminſter*.

NOTHING therefore remains, but that, once upon a Time, a certain Number of Biſhops met together, and ſettled ſuch Conſtitutions, from which the reſt are derived; otherwiſe we muſt fetch them from the Civil Magiſtrate, or confeſs them all to be Uſurpations.

THOSE who ſuppoſe the firſt, are obliged to tell us, What Number are neceſſary to this Purpoſe; and if another equal Number ſhould ſettle a different Eſtabliſhment in the ſame Diſtrict or Province, who will be the Schiſmatics? I think it is agreed by all High-Churchmen, That every one of theſe can make as many other Biſhops, and Governors of the whole Church, as he pleaſes; and therefore, if one of them in a frolickſome Humour ſhould create Two or Three Hundred of theſe *Eccleſiaſtical Princes*, are they all to have Votes in the *Epiſcopal College*? And I ask this Queſtion the rather, becauſe I myſelf once knew a drunken Popiſh Biſhop in *Ireland*, who would have made theſe Spiritual Sovereigns from Morning to Night, for a Pot of Ale apiece.

IF it ſhould be ſaid, (as indeed what is not or may not be ſaid by Perſons of their Perſpicuity?) that the Power itſelf comes from God, but the Exerciſe of it is to be limited and directed by the Civil Sovereign; I anſwer, that,

t, beſides the egregious Blunder of diſtin-ſhing between Power and the Exerciſe of wer, the firſt being only a Right to do cer-n Actions, in which the other conſiſts: This es up the whole Queſtion; for there can be greater Power neceſſary to give an Authority, n to take it away; and every Reſtriction and mitation is taking it away in Part: No one can ve a Right to depoſe a Temporal Prince from Part of his juſt Dominions, without having the ſame Right to deprive him of the hole; and in this reſpect there can be no fference between Temporal and Eccleſiaſtical vereignties.

IF theſe Gentlemen were not in Poſſeſſion ſanctifying Nonſenſe, they could not venture tell us, that our Saviour has given Power to hops to execute Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction ough the whole Earth; and conſequently all ankind muſt be their Spiritual Subjects: But this great Power may here, below, be limited reſtrained to Cities or Provinces, and par-led out and divided in ſuch a manner, that me may have large Diſtricts, others ſmall es, in which no one elſe muſt officiate; nay, t many more may have none at all, and yet ry one have univerſal Juriſdiction, and be a hop of the whole Earth.

THESE, with a huge Heap beſides of glaring Abſurdities and Contradictions, muſt be maintained by thoſe, who would reconcile the Divine Right of Biſhops with any Proteſtant Eſtabliſhment now in the World. I have ſo amply ſhewn how inconſiſtent it is with our own, from the whole Tenor of our Laws and Canons, as well as the repeated Acknowledgments of the Clergy themſelves, that I ſhould think it not only needleſs, but impertinent, to ſay any thing further of it, did we not daily hear of ſuch Numbers of our Spiritual Guides, who rail againſt theſe Laws at the time they ſwear and ſubſcribe to them, and complain aloud of them as Violations of their own Divine Rights, and denounce Judgments upon the Nation for ſuch Uſurpations.

I SHALL therefore, in my next Paper, deſcant a little upon the voluntary and moſt applauded Actions of the higheſt, even of theſe High Gentlemen; and ſhew that they cannot help acknowledging the Principles which I maintain, even in the Inſtances where they would oppoſe it, and amidſt their greateſt Demands for Power. This I intend to do, not with the leaſt Expectation, or vain Hope, of inducing them to alter their Meaſures, (there being a Preſcription among the Eccleſiaſtics againſt ſuch Lay Follies) but (if poſſible) to open the

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Eyes of their blind and ſtupid Adorers, and to let them ſee what wretched Idols they are worſhipping.

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NUMBER XVI.

Wedneſday, May 4. 1720.

The Inconſiſtency of the Principles *and* Practices *of* High-Church; *with ſome Advice to the* Clergy.

IF the Eccleſiaſtics have any Divine Right which is neither derived from the Civil Magiſtrate, nor the Conſent of voluntary Societies, it muſt be veſted in a ſingle Perſon; or a certain Number of Perſons, which we all call Biſhops; or in common to them all: The firſt is *Popery*, and the Laſt *Presbytery*. But I think, that there is no Eſtabliſhment which now ſubſiſts, or ever did ſubſiſt in the World, which does, or did, aſſert the Divine Right of Biſhops, independent of the Pope; and conſe-

quently it is the *Proprium* or peculiar Whimsy of our own perjured High-Churchmen, not only in Oppoſition to their Oaths and Subſcriptions, (as I have ſhewed already) but to the moſt applauded Actions of their greateſt Champions; which 'tis the Buſineſs of this Paper to make out.

IF there be a Divine Right in the Biſhops to govern the Church, it is ſpiritual Rebellion, and the higheſt Sacrilege, to uſurp upon this great Authority; but then, what will become of all the daily Daubing, and fulſome Panegyric, upon the beſt eſtabliſhed Church in the World? Since I think it is agreed by all the Clergy, that the Power of Legiſlation, as far as they have any thing to do with it, is veſted in the Convocation, which conſiſts of two Houſes, one of Biſhops, the other of Presbyters; a Conſtitution utterly inconſiſtent with this Divine Right; which the High-Clergy have been ſo far from regretting, or complaining of, that it is one of their moſt eſſential Characteriſtics, to maintain the Power of the Lower Houſe againſt the Upper; that is, of Presbyters againſt their own Dioceſans.

THEY claim a co-ordinate Power with them in the ſupremeſt Acts of Church-Government; an Authority of acting by themſelves, to chuſe their own Time of meeting, to ſit as often and as long as they pleaſe, to adjourn by their own

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Authority, to begin what Buſineſs they think fit, to chuſe their own Committees, excuſe Abſence, receive Proxies, judge of Elections, cenſure their own Members, and do all other Acts, which ought to be done by the ſole Authority of a Houſe which is its own Maſter and Judge: All which, though they are rank Presbytery, yet are alſo become the genuine Principles of modern High-Churchmen: At the ſame time that they aſſert a ſole, divine, apoſtolic, and independent Power in the Biſhops to govern the Church.

THE aſſerting of theſe Rights of the Lower Houſe, is the Merit of their preſent Champion *, ſupplies the Want of Charity in him, and covers a Thouſand Faults; and 'tis much to be feared and lamented, that all the late Zeal of a much greater Man †, and the preſent Services which he is doing, will ſcarcely atone for his having acted formerly upon Low-Church Principles, in defending the Prerogative of the Crown, and maintaining the Power of the Upper Houſe over the Lower.

WHAT Perſons or Party have ſupported the Biſhops, and their Authority, ever ſince the Revolution, againſt their own Presbyters? All Low-Churchmen. Who were thoſe who have

* Dr. *Francis Atterbury*, late Biſhop of *Rocheſter*.
† Dr. *William Wake*, late Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*.

been always aſperſing, calumniating and libelling the Two laſt Archbiſhops, our preſent Metropolitan, till very lately, the laſt Biſhop of *Saliſbury*, and indeed every worthy Prelate, but the High-Church Prieſts, and their Followers? And who have honoured and defended their Perſons and Characters, but Low-Churchmen?

WHO exhibited Articles againſt a preſent Biſhop, for having preached the King's Supremacy in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, (wholly inconſiſtent with the Divine Right of Biſhops) but the High-Church Clergy? Who ſupported the late Dean of *Carliſle* againſt his own Diocеſan? All High-Churchmen. And who defended both theſe Biſhops? All Low-Churchmen. Who burnt by the Hands of the common Hangman, a Book written by a Right Reverend Biſhop, which aſſerted King *William*'s Title upon the once genuine Principles of Conqueſt, and paſſed a ſcandalous and groundleſs Vote upon the late learned Biſhop of *Worceſter*, but High-Churchmen? And who voted for theſe Biſhops? All Low-Churchmen.

SUCH open Blunders, and glaring Inconſiſtencies, muſt theſe Men be reduced to, who meaſure all Opinions by their preſent Intereſt and Paſſions; and who have no other Standard of Right and Wrong, but what moſt gratifies their

their Ambition, Pride, Covetouſneſs, or Revenge.

I CAN ſafely ſay, that, as I had no Intereſt in entering upon this Deſign, nor can have any in continuing it, but to promote the Cauſe of Virtue and Truth, and to ſupport our preſent legal Eſtabliſhment; by ſhewing the Laity, that they are free, both by the Laws of God and their Country, from all the wild and enthuſiaſtic Pretenſions of the high-flown Eccleſiaſtics: As I was willing alſo, not wholly to deſpair of being able to reſtore again the Apoſtate Clergymen to the Church of *England*, and to make them really of the Principles which they ſwear to, pretend to monopolize, and yet conſtantly oppoſe; ſo I ſhall have the utmoſt Pleaſure, if I can contribute to theſe great Ends, and ſhall rejoice over ſuch an Occaſion, to drop this Paper.

As the High Clergy can have no other Motive to purſue theſe Principles, but the temporal Intereſt of their Order, in Oppoſition to Chriſtianity, and the apparent Laws of their Country; ſo I ſhall endeavour to convince them, that they are graſping at what they can never reach; and, with the Dog in the Fable, loſing a Subſtance to catch at a Shadow.

IT was a Saying of the wiſe Lord *Halifax*, that Dr. *Echard*, in his Treatiſe of the *Con-*

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tempt of the Clergy, had omitted the *chief Cauſe* of it, namely, (not their Ignorance, but) *the Knowledge of the Laity*; and it is very true, that the Miſts of Superſtition and Fear, which have been ſo long raiſing before our Eyes, are pretty well diſſipated and diſperſed; nor will an horizontal Hat, a ſtarched Band, and long Petticoats, paſs in this Age for eſſential Marks of Wiſdom and Virtue.

THE *Rehearſal* has long ſince told us, that the graveſt of all Beaſts is an *Aſs*, and the graveſt of all Birds is an *Owl*; and indeed the World ſeems generally of Opinion now, that ſound Senſe, polite Learning, good Breeding, and an eaſy and affable Converſation, are not only conſiſtent with true Religion, but are moſt productive of it; and ſure it cannot be denied, that the Laity, for the moſt part, exceed in theſe Qualities.

THEY are reſolved, at laſt, to ſee with their own Eyes, hear with their own Ears, and feel with their own Hands: *Ipſe dixit* will paſs no longer. It is a ridiculous Attempt to endeavour to deceive any one, who will not conſent to be hood-winked: A Jade will not be put into an Horſe-Mill, till ſhe is blinded; nor could *Samſon* be led about by the *Philiſtines*, till they had put out his Eyes. I would therefore give my old Friends a Hint, though, I doubt,

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to little Purpoſe, namely, to change the Courſe of their Sailing, according to the Shifting of the Winds and the Tides, and not run the Danger of Shipwreck upon thoſe Coaſts, where their Predeceſſors formerly found deep Water, and ſafe Riding.

I AM ſenſible, that many of the High-Church *Popiſh* Clergy will laugh in their Sleeves at this Advice, and think there is Folly enough yet left among the Laity, to ſupport their Authority; and will hug themſelves, and rejoice over the Ignorance of the Univerſities, the Stupidity of the drunken 'Squires, the Panic of the tender Sex, and the never to be ſhaken Conſtancy of the Multitude; but I would put them in mind, that all theſe fine Viſions have once already miſled and deceived them, and therefore may again.

I DESIRE that they will count their Gains, and recollect what Addition of Power they got, or were like to have got, by the late great Revolution of temporal Politics, which they were ſo inſtrumental to bring about: Indeed they were called together, and had a Liberty given them to ſcold and quarrel with one another; but they were not ſuffered to hurt ſo much as a Mouſe; and even Mr. *Whiſton* laughed at them. Whilſt their Patrons were making their Court to *France* and the *Pretender*, for Preferments;

ments; the Lower Houſe of *Convocation* was very uſefully employed and diverted, in compiling Forms of Prayer for conſecrating Church-yards, and for Criminals who were to be hanged; which, 'tis ſaid, a certain great Perſon then called, *Throwing out a Barrel to the Whale.*

I AM afraid, that they are not well informed of what it much concerns them to know, namely, that even the *Tories* themſelves will not be Prieſt-ridden; and that thoſe amongſt them, who have any Senſe, laugh at High-Church Principles in private, though they bow to the Broachers of them, and ſeem to admire them, in public; of the Truth of which I myſelf have been frequently a Witneſs: So that of whatever Importance they may ſeem to themſelves, they are, in Truth, but Tools to factious Men; are only employed to do their Drudgery, and run down their Game; and will ſcarce have for their Pains even the picking of the Bones, when (like Jackals) they have hunted down the Lion's Prey.

I SHOULD not have thought myſelf at Liberty to have unburdened my Mind thus freely, if it had not been to have ſerved ſome of my Friends among theſe High-Church Clergy, by helping them to a little of that Underſtanding, which is not to be learnt in Univerſities, and in Conver-

Converſation with one another; and I wiſh, (tho' I cannot hope, much leſs perſuade myſelf to believe) that when they have duly conſidered what I have ſaid, they will change their Style, and endeavour to atone for all the Miſchiefs which they have hitherto done, by being hereafter Advocates for Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Liberty; will make uſe of the Influence they have over the poor deluded Multitude to promote true Religion, as well as Peace and Happineſs, amongſt Mankind; and be no longer the Boutefeus or Incendiaries of every popular Faction and Tumult. *Which God, of his infinite Mercy, grant*, &c.

NUMBER XVII.

Wedneſday, May 11. 1720.

Reaſons *why the* High-Church Prieſts *are the moſt* Wicked *of all* Men.

IT ſeems natural and reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that Clergymen, who have a learned, ingenuous and Chriſtian Education; who are bred up in ſtrict Diſcipline; who, in their Youth, ſtudy the Works of *PLATO*, *ARISTOTLE*, *CICERO*, and other Heathen Moraliſts; as alſo the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, which they believe to be divinely inſpired; who attend daily Prayers, and frequent Sacraments; who pretend to have a Call from the *Holy Ghoſt*, *to teach* the World; who ſpend a great Part of their Time in compoſing divine Diſcourſes or Sermons; who are obliged to pray and converſe daily with weak, ſick, and ſcrupulous Pariſhioners, about heavenly Matters; who, by Converſation and cloſe Union with one another

ther at Viſitations, and other holy Meetings, d (I preſume) by Prayers together, have eat Opportunities of improving themſelves Virtue and Godlineſs; and who are under a rticular Obligation to ſet good Examples, d under a ſort of Neceſſity to obſerve ſome ecorum; ſhould be *better*, than other en. But yet, it is a Matter of common bſervation, that they are not ſo; almoſt all the *Roman* Church, and too many in other hurches, being in an eminent Degree notoouſly guilty of thoſe Vices, which are of moſt nicious, or moſt extenſive ill Conſequences, d moſt Antichriſtian; ſuch as Ambition, ride, Anger, Hatred, Malice, Revenge, Liiouſneſs, Uncharitableneſs, Hypocriſy, Percution, Sedition, Treaſon, Equivocation, d Perjury (whereof Multitudes of the Laity e not only wholly innocent, but remarkable r the Virtues oppoſite to them); to ſay nothing of their equal Guilt with other Men in ſpect to the inferior Vices of Swearing, Drunkneſs, and ſuch-like. And this Fact is honeſtly confeſſed by the late Biſhop of *Sarum*, who in his *Memoirs* (which we expect with the utmoſt Impatience ſoon to ſee publiſhed) tells us, "That he always believes well of Laymen, till he ſees Cauſe to change *his Mind*; though as to Churchmen, it is otherwiſe with *him*; "for

" for *he* has ſeen ſo much amiſs in that Profeſ-
" ſion, that *he* is inclined always to think ill of
" them, till *he* ſees Cauſe to think otherwiſe."

WHEREUPON it is a frequent Subject of Inquiry, how it comes to paſs, or what are the Cauſes of this Fact, which would never be credited, if it was not very manifeſt. Some are at a Loſs about this Matter; but, for my part, I am not. And the Fact is no more ſurpriſing to me, than are other *common Facts* concerning Men; which, by being *common*, muſt have plain and manifeſt Cauſes. The *Cauſes* of this *Fact*, in particular, are ſo plain to me, that from the mere *Conſideration* of *them*, I ſhould wonder if I found the Clergy better than they are; and I eſteem thoſe Cauſes to be ſo neceſſarily productive of their Effect, that I do not think it Preſumption to pretend to know the Doings of the *High Clergy*, in all Ages, to have been wicked, even without *Hiſtory* or *Teſtimony*, which are requiſite to give us the Knowledge of other Mens Crimes. GROTIUS's Obſervation, * *Qui legit Hiſtoriam Eccleſiaſticam, quid legit niſi Vitia Epiſcoporum?* muſt be true, and juſtly applied to all other Clergy as well as the Chriſtian.

* Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, *nothing elſe but a Detail of the Villainies of Prieſts.*

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IT is not the Deſign of this Paper, to aſſign the general Cauſes of this Fact, or all the particular Cauſes, which render ſo *many* of our Clergy ſo bad as they are. That Subject I reſerve for a Treatiſe by itſelf. I ſhall at preſent only aſſign ſome of thoſe Cauſes, which I conceive to have the moſt direct Influence on the Morals of ſo many of our Clergy.

YOUTH is the great Opportunity of Life, which ſettleth and fixeth moſt Men either in a good or bad Courſe; and the Impreſſions, eſpecially bad Impreſſions, then made, are uſually laſting. Youth is alſo a Time of Innocence, when Men have Horror for Vice, which they never commit at firſt without offering Violence to themſelves. The firſt and moſt natural Thoughts of Man are to be honeſt, and juſt, and reaſonable, as the beſt Things which he can do for his own Sake; and it is the Influence of ill Example, and of the common Practice of the World, which, for the moſt part, changes his Sentiments, and puts him upon ill Actions. But the natural Innocence of Youth being once broken in upon, Man, by Degrees, grows hardened and impudent in Wickedneſs, and commits it without Shame or Remorſe.

NOTHING therefore has ſo direct a Tendency to debauch the World, as to debauch the

the Youth: And the earlier, the more effectual; for thereby Innocence and Virtue may be so effaced, as in a little time to leave no Memory or Trace of them, no more than QUARTILLA in PETRONIUS ARBITER had, who, though a young Woman, *did not remember, that she had ever been a Maid.*

NOW it seems to me peculiar to the Clergy in most Parts of *Christendom*, to begin the World with the greatest Breach upon the natural Honesty and Integrity of Youth, and with the greatest Violence upon their own Consciences, that can be imagined; as will be evident from the following Particulars.

1. FIRST, the Youth who are sent to Universities, are early initiated into Perjury, by being obliged to take College-Oaths, in some respects impertinent or ridiculous, in others wicked, or impossible to be kept; by which means, false Swearing becomes familiar to them, and they esteem Oaths only as Matters of Form, and their Breach to be but common Qualifications for Preferment.

2. SECONDLY, When they go into *Holy Orders*, they profess, that they *are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them* their *Office*: though nothing is more notorious, than that many are *inwardly moved* by the Prospect

of Power and Wealth, and by Neceſſity of a Maintenance; and that many uſe all the Arts and Means, to no purpoſe, to procure to themſelves Law and Phyſic Fellowſhips in Colleges, or other Lay-preferments, (where no Engagements contrary to their Judgments and Conſciences are requiſite) in order to avoid the Burden of going into Orders: And by Conſequence, that they feel no *inward Motions of the Holy Ghoſt*; unleſs the Holy Spirit can be ſuppoſed conſtantly to concur, juſt as ſerves the Purpoſes of Men engaged in the Purſuit of their temporal Intereſts. Here then is a ſolemn Lye, and Proſtitution of the Conſcience, in all thoſe who do not feel themſelves moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

3. THIRDLY, Many of the Clergy abroad ſubſcribe *Articles of Religion*, which they do not believe. Mr. *WHISTON* (*Eſſays*, &c. *p.* 237.) ſays, "he believes there is ſcarce one "Clergyman, even of our reformed Church, "that has conſidered and examined Things with "any Care, who believes all the 39 Articles in "their proper and original Meaning." This implies, that the Unbelievers, among the Clergy, of the *Articles*, are very numerous; unleſs it be ſuppoſed, that few of the Clergy *conſider and examine Things with any Care*. But the Thing is manifeſt, from the *Sophiſtry* and *Knavery*

very uſed by many of them to palliate their Subſcription to the Articles; which imply, that they do not believe thoſe *Articles*. (1.) Some pretend to ſubſcribe them as Articles, which, though in Part erroneous, they oblige themſelves not to contradict. (2.) Some pretend to ſubſcribe them in any Senſe, wherein they can underſtand them according to the Rules of Grammar. (3). Some pretend to ſubſcribe them in any Senſe, wherein they can reconcile them to Scripture. (4.) And others chuſe the Senſe, which they pretend to ſubſcribe them in, out of the ſeveral Senſes which they ſuppoſe intended to be held forth by the ſame Articles. And I wiſh more of them pretended to ſubſcribe them honeſtly and fairly, namely, in the Senſe really intended by the Impoſers, who, *to prevent Diverſity of Opinions*, impoſe their own Senſe, as *agreeable to Scripture*; and therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to have intended, that the *Articles* ſhould differ from all other Writings, which all Readers endeavour to underſtand in the one Meaning intended by the Authors. Nay, to ſubſcribe the *Articles* without believing them, is ſo reputable among the High-Church Prieſts, that a fair Subſcriber, that is, one who ſubſcribes in the one Senſe, which he ſuppoſes originally intended, paſſes amongſt

ong them for the worſt of Men, namely, a *sbyterian*, and an Enemy to the Church.

. FOURTHLY, Every Clergyman inſti-ed into any Benefice, *ſwears*, *That* he *has de no Simoniacal Payment*, *Contract*, *or Pro-e*, *directly or indirectly*, *by* himſelf, *or by any er*, *to his Knowledge*, *or with his Conſent*, *to Perſon or Perſons whatſoever*, *for or concern-the procuring and obtaining of his Eccleſiaſtical nity*, *Place*, *Preferment*, *Office*, *or Living*, ſpectively and particularly naming the ſame ereunto he is to be admitted, inſtituted, col-d, inſtalled, or confirmed) *nor will at any e hereafter perform or ſatisfy any ſuch kind of ment*, *Contract or Promiſe*, *made by any r*, *without his Knowledge or Conſent: So* him *God*, *through* JESUS CHRIST. NOW, ther any of them break this Oath, I leave he Conſideration of the Reader, who ought eſteem all Clergymen taking it guilty, that r make Preſents to any body, or marry, or pound with the Patron about Tythes, in r to get the Benefice; no leſs than thoſe , by Bargain, pay Money before or after the fice is procured, are guilty.

FIFTHLY, An Oath of Allegiance to his eſty King *GEORGE* is taken by all Be-ed Clergymen; who may be juſtly deemed ured, if they do not pay the ſame Regard

to his Majeſty, which they pretend to have been due to King *CHARLES* the Firſt or Second, or to Queen *ANNE*, at the Beginning and latter End of her Reign. The Popularity and Credit to which this Perjury intitles the High-Church Clergy among one another, and the Diſgrace attending thoſe who are faithful to the Oaths which they have taken, (the former being dubbed by them *honeſt Men*, and good Churchmen, for breaking their Oaths; and the latter *Rogues*, and Betrayers of the Church for keeping them) leaves us no room to doubt that the Perjured of this Kind are but too numerous. However, I am willing to think, it would be Injuſtice to ſay, that many Laymen need not go out of their own Pariſhes, to find one at leaſt, and often more, where there are Lecturers and Curates.

THE Difficulty therefore mentioned in the Beginning of this Paper, admits of a plain Solution; and it is as eaſy to conceive, that Men who begin the World in this manner, ſhould exceed others in Wickedneſs, who either begin the World innocently, or are under no Neceſſity to begin it wickedly; as it is to conceive, that Butchers and Soldiers ſhould be less humane than others; or that young Women once proſtituted, ſhould loſe all Modeſty.

NUMBER XVIII.

Wedneſday, May 18. 1720.

A general Idea *of* Prieſtcraft.

I Have, in my Eighth and other Papers, vindicated the Almighty from the Imputation Obſcurity in revealing his Will to Mankind; ſhewn, that he is plain, exact, and even cumſtantial, when he delivers his Precepts to m. I ſhall now expoſe the contrary Prodings of weak and corrupt Men; by giving a eral Idea of the principal Arts, by which deſigning Prieſts of all Religions have kept Craft and Impoſtures from a Diſcovery, made the Truth, as far as they could, inacible.

VERY mad Action, or Principle, in Reon and Government, muſt have ſome aping Cauſe aſſigned for it, proper to make People ſtare, and to hide the true one.

Mankind, as tame as Prieſts and Tyrants have made them, will not be content to be deceived or butchered without having a Reaſon for it. The Pope, who aſſumes a Power to judge for all Men, and devotes whole Nations to Damnation and Maſſacre, and ſends People to Heaven or Hell in Colonies, juſt as their Money or Diſobedience determines him, acts a very conſiſtent Part in tying the Keys of both Worlds to his Girdle, and in ſtyling himſelf God's abſolute *Vicar General*. Theſe are *his* Reaſons; and the Catholic and more Orthodox Parts of *Europe* are well content with them.

IN former Reigns, when many of our *Engliſh* Clergy thought fit to tye us Hand and Foot, and deliver us over to our Kings, as their proper Goods and Chattels, to be fed or flayed according to their *ſacred* Will and Pleaſure, they told us, it was the Ordinance of God, that one Man might glut his Luſt, or his Cruelty, with the Deſtruction of Millions; and if we kept out of Harm's way, we were aſſuredly damned. And theſe were *their* Reaſons then. Of late, it is true, many of them have changed their Doctrine, and their Behaviour. We are, it ſeems, *at preſent*, living in the Guilt of Rebellion, which is a damnable Sin; and ſo we are to rebel upon Pain of Damnation, to free ourſelves from the Damnation which

which follows Rebellion. Theſe are their Reaſonings *now*.

FORMERLY, when ſome certain Perſons were content to be Proteſtants, the Church of *Rome* was the *Spiritual Babylon*, and the *Scarlet Whore*, and *Sodom*; and the *Pope* was *Anti-chriſt*; for he ſat in the Temple of God, and exalted himſelf above all that is called God. But this was Truth, and could not hold long, conſidering into whoſe Hands it was fallen; and therefore in a little time, when they had a Mind to get into the Pope's Place, and to do and ſay as he did, the Church of *Rome* became all of a ſudden *a true Church*, and an *old Church*, and *our Mother Church*. In ſhort, the *old Withered Harlot, and Mother of Whoredoms*, grew a great Beauty, and *her Daughter* here in *England* reſembled her *Mamma* more and more every Day ſhe lived, and gave the foregoing Reaſons for it.

FROM hence it is plain, that though for every Impoſture ſome Cauſe muſt be aſſigned, yet a very indifferent one will ſerve the Turn. The Groſs of the World are dull and credulous: Few make any Inquiries at all, and fewer make ſucceſsful ones. It is, however, ſtill beſt, if the Cheat ſtands upon ſuch a Foundation, that it cannot be ſearched nor examined by any *Human Eye*.

WHEN *Numa Pompilius* told the *Romans* that he converſed familiarly with the Nymph *Egeria*; which of them could pay her a Viſit and ask her, whether the Prince and ſhe were in earneſt ſuch very good Neighbours? And when *Mahomet* took ſuch a wide Range thro' the other World upon his Nag *Elborach*, and told Wonders at his Return; there was neither Man nor Horſe in all *Arabia*, that could take the ſame Journey to diſprove him; or, when he was pleaſed to be thought converſant with the Angel *Gabriel*, I do not hear, that ever the Angel ſigned a Certificate, that they were no-wiſe acquainted. The Quack, who had found out the true *Fern-ſeed*, and the *Green Dragon*, thought it, no doubt, a hard Matter to prove him a Lyar.

IN the Heathen Temples of old, neither the *Sibyls*, nor any other Prieſts or Belchers of Prophecy, Male or Female, were anſwerable for the Oracles, and dark Sayings, which they uttered. They had what they ſaid from God, who never once contradicted them. It was impoſſible to come at him for perſonal Information; and a very profane Crime not to believe his Prieſt; and to diſtruſt the Deity himſelf, was *almoſt* as bad: You had nothing to do, but to *captivate your Reaſon to your Faith*, and ſwallow the *Verdum Sacerdotis*. If you did not

ot, the Judgment of the God, that is, the An-
er of his Prieſt, was ſure to purſue you.

THE ſame Policy has been ever practiſed
y the Deluders of Mankind in all Names and
hapes. They have always entrenched them-
lves behind the Ramparts of Myſtery, Un-
ertainties and Terrors. The *Romiſh* Clergy
aintain all their Pretenſions and Power by
octrines which are calculated to make the
eople either wonder or tremble. And when
Man has loſt his Courage, and his Under-
anding, you may eaſily cheat or terrify him
to as tractable an Animal as the Creation af-
rds. The Doctrines of Purgatory, and of the
rieſts Power to forgive or damn, are alone
rong enongh to frighten moſt Folks into what
iberality and Submiſſion the Church thinks fit
demand of them. And we all know, that
e is not over-modeſt upon ſuch Occaſions:
ring me all thou haſt, and follow me, is her
yle.

I WISH I could keep theſe Impoſtures, and
ild Claims, altogether out of *England*, and
onfine them to Popiſh and Infidel Countries
ly. But that which is obvious and avowed,
annot be hid. Very many of our high Jaco-
ite Clergy aim at Dominion by the ſame
icked Means, and hood-wink and alarm us all
ey can. They lead us out of the Road of

Reaſon, and play their Engines in the Dark; and all the Illumination we can get from them is, that we are all in a Miſt. Without their Guidance we go aſtray, and with it we go blindfold. All their Arguments are fetched from their own Authority. Their Aſſertions are no leſs than Rules and Laws to us; and where they lead, we muſt follow, though into Darkneſs and Servitude. If we grow wilful and break looſe from our Orthodox Ignorance, we are purſued with hard Names and Curſes. Doubting is Infidelity, Reaſon is Atheiſm. What can we do in this Caſe? There is no Medium between a Blockhead and a Schiſmatic: If we follow them blindly, we are the Firſt; the Second, if we leave them. We want Faith, if we will not take their Word; we want Eyes, if we do.

THEY indeed give a Sugar-plum, and refer us to the Bible for Proof of all that they ſay. But, in Truth, this Privilege, if we examine it, will appear none at all; but, on the contrary, an arrant Trick, and groſs Mockery. For when they have ſent us to a Text, will they allow to conſtrue it our own way? No ſuch Matter: They have nailed a Meaning to it, and will permit it to bear no other. You may read, provided you read with *their Spectacles*; and examine their Propoſitions *freely*, provided you take them every one for granted.

You

You may exert your Reaſon freely, but be ſure let it be to no Purpoſe; and uſe your Underſtanding independently, under their abſolute Direction and Controul. I wonder how theſe Men could ever have the Front to accuſe the Church of *Rome* for locking up the Bible in an unknown Tongue!

THE eternal War that they wage againſt Reaſon, which they uſe juſt as they do Scripture, is founded upon good Policy; but it is pleaſant to obſerve their Manner of attacking it. They reaſon againſt Reaſon, uſe Reaſon againſt the Uſe of Reaſon, and ſhew, from very good Reaſon, that Reaſon is good for nothing. When they think it on their own Side, then they apply all its Aids to convince or confound thoſe who dare to think without their Concurrence: Therefore, in their Controverſies about Religion, they frequently appeal to Reaſon; but we muſt not accept the Appeal, for if our Reaſon be not their Reaſon, it is no Reaſon. They uſe it, or the Appearance of it, againſt all Men; but no Man muſt uſe it againſt them. As there is no ſuch thing as arguing and perſuading without the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon, it is a little abſurd, if not ungrateful, in theſe Gentlemen, to decry it at the ſame time that they are imploying it; to turn the Batteries of Reaſon againſt Reaſon, and make itſelf deſtroy itſelf.

NEITHER Scripture, therefore, nor Reaſon, by theſe Rules, ſignify any thing till the Prieſts have explained them, and made them ſignify ſomething; and the Word of God is not the Word of God, till they have declared its Senſe, and made it ſo. Thus, by the time that Scripture and Reaſon have been modelled, and qualified, and cooked up by the High-Church Jacobite Clergy, they are neither Scripture nor Reaſon, but a perfect *French Diſh*, or what the Spiritual Cooks pleaſe; an Oleo or Hodge-podge of Nonſenſe, Jargon and Authority.

FROM all that has been ſaid, the following Concluſions may be drawn: Such Clergymen as I have been above deſcribing, prove every thing by aſſerting it, and make any Pretence ſupport any Claim. They build Syſtems upon pretended Facts, and argue from Propoſitions which are either highly improbable, or certainly falſe. When they cannot convince, they confound us; when they cannot perſuade, they terrify. We have but two Ways to try the Truth of their Doctrines, and the Validity of their Demands, namely, *Reaſon* and *Revelation*; and they deprive us of both, by making the one dark, the other dangerous.

WHAT a Contempt muſt this Tribe have for Mankind!

G.

NUM-

NUMBER XIX.

Wedneſday, May 25. 1720.

Eccleſiaſtical Authority, *as claimed by the* High Clergy, *an* Enemy *to* Religion.

SINCE there are ſo many different Opinions and Apprehenſions in the World about Matters of Religion, and every Sect and Party does with ſo much Confidence pretend, that they, and they only, are in the Truth; the great Difficulty and Queſtion is, By what Means Men may be ſecured from dangerous Errors and Miſtakes in Religion. For this End ſome have thought it neceſſary, that there ſhould be an infallible Church, in the Communion whereof every Man may be ſecured from the Dangers of a wrong Belief: And others have thought it neceſſary, that their ſeveral fallible Churches ſhould have Authority in Matters of Faith, in order to keep up a right Faith in the People of the Fundamentals of Religion.

BUT it ſeems God has not thought either neceſſary: If he had, he would have revealed himſelf more plainly in this Matter than in any particular Point of Faith whatſoever. He would have told us expreſly, and in the plaineſt Words, that he had appointed an infallible Guide and Judge in Matters of Religion, or Men who ſhould have Authority in Matters of Faith; and would likewiſe have plainly marked out him or them, for Men to have had recourſe to on all Occaſions; becauſe our Belief depending on this infallible Judge, or on theſe Men who had Authority, we could not be ſafe from Miſtake in particular Points, without ſo plain and clear a Revelation of this infallible Judge, or of theſe Men who had Authority, that there could be no Miſtake about him or them; nor could there be an End of any other Controverſies in Religion, unleſs this Matter of an infallible Judge, or of Men who had Authority, were out of our Controverſy.

IT is not pretended by any Advocates of Infallibility or Authority, that God has delivered the Matter expreſly and plainly in the Scriptures. They proceed, and build only on Inferences and Deductions from thence. And the Papiſts are divided among themſelves as to the Seat and Extent of Infallibility; as the Proteſtant-Papiſts are, in reſpect to the Seat and Extent of

of Authority. And both Infallibility and Authority are manifeſtly abſurd Pretences in point of Reaſon; though Infallibility ſeems leſs abſurd than Authority. The Pretence of Infallibility is plainly abſurd; becauſe the Infallible Church gives conſtant and daily Proofs of its Fallibility: And the Pretence of Authority is abſurd; becauſe that may lead Men into any Miſtakes whatſoever. But, as I obſerved, Infallibility is leſs abſurd; becauſe that is of a Piece, and conſiſtent with, and neceſſarily follows from Authority: Whereas Authority without Infallibility, ſuppoſes a Power given Men by God to lead the World into any Miſtakes, and to ſubvert Chriſtianity itſelf. But however this be, they are both ſufficiently ridiculous; and it is ridiculous to ſend Men, in order to their Salvation, to believe either in the *Pope*, or Dr. *Swift*, or Dr. *Burgeſs*, on whoſe Authority if Men depend, they can only be *Papiſts*, or *Swiftites*, or *Burgeſites*, and not Chriſtians.

IF then God has not provided an infallible Judge, nor any Men with Authority in Matters of Religion; there is ſome other Way, whereby Men may be ſecured againſt all dangerous Errors and Miſtakes in Religion, and whereby they may diſcern all ſuch Truths as are neceſſary to their Salvation. Now that Way our Saviour

viour has declared to us in these Words, *If any Man desire to do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself:* That is, if a Man has an honest and sincere Mind, and a hearty Desire to do the Will of God, he has the best Preservative against dangerous Mistakes in Matters of Religion; and God, or his Understanding, will enable him to distinguish sufficiently, whether Doctrines be of God or of Men, and will conduct him into all necessary Truths.

THIS is a true and plain Answer to the Question proposed; and also true and plain Religion, or Christianity, if Men will be governed by CHRIST, the *Author and Finisher* thereof. This is easy to be known, and requires little Time to learn. This frees Men from all Concern about the intricate and endless Squabbles of Divines, disputing which of them are to have Authority, and wherein their own Authority consists; and ought to set them at Ease; for, as Christians, or Followers of CHRIST, they have nothing to do to inquire, what Priests are to have an Antichristian Authority over one another, and the Laity.

BUT notwithstanding the Plainness of the Case, it is no wonder, that weak People now-a-days should believe in Priests, and not in Christ; should be Priestlings, and not Christians;

ns; when, in our Bleſſed Saviour's own me, the *Jews* were ready to believe in any poſtors, and averſe to believing in him, as himſelf tells us. *I am come*, ſays he, *in my ther's Name, and ye receive me not: If an ber ſhall come in his own Name; him ye will eive: How can you believe, which receive nour one of another?* That is, (to make a rt of Application to our preſent Times) You have the Bible among you, wherein I teach you in my Father's Name, wherein I bid you ſearch, examine, and try all things for yourſelves, and to call no Man *Maſter* in Religion upon Earth: That Bible you reject, in not underſtanding it for yourſelves; but if any Man ſet up for an authoritative Interpreter of it, him you will receive for your *Maſter*, and call yourſelves after his Name. How can you be Believers in, and Followers of me, who believe upon the Authority of Men, and reject the Authority of God?"

CHRISTIANITY, or Religion, thus truly nderſtood, has too many Enemies to make it oſt Labour to prove it true by Arguments. And therefore I obſerve, in Proof of our Saviour's Doctrine, "That a hearty Deſire and "Endeavour to do the Will of God, is the "Preſervative againſt dangerous Miſtakes."

Firſt,

First, That therein our Saviour recommend the beſt and moſt proper Diſpoſition of Mind to qualify a Man to receive Truths from God, to enable him to make a right Judgment as to what proceeds from God, and what from Men. For a good Man is moſt likely to have right Apprehenſions of God and Divine Things. Secondly, Such a Diſpoſition in a Man ſuppoſes his Impartiality in the Search of Truth; that he has no Partiality to any particular Doctrine; and that he is ſuperior to the Temptations of any Paſſions, (which blind the Mind) and has no Reaſon to deceive himſelf by receiving Things without Evidence, nor Inclination to reject what has Evidence. Thirdly, God will not ſuffer the beſt diſpoſed Minds to fall into dangerous Miſtakes; but will, as he ſays himſelf, *Guide* them *in Judgment*, and *ſhew* them his *Way*. Again, God ſays by SOLOMON, *If thou incline thine Ear unto Wiſdom, and apply thy Heart to Underſtanding; yea, if thou crieſt after Knowledge, and lifteſt up thy Voice for Underſtanding, if thou ſeekeſt her as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid Treaſure; then ſhalt thou underſtand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God.* Indeed, the Bible is ſo plain, as to all neceſſary Truths, that he that runs may read; and a Day-labourer cannot fail of finding

Truth,

Truth, that ſearches it there; and is in no Danger of failing, unleſs he delivers himſelf up abſolutely to ſome Guide to interpret the Bible for him. Fourthly and Laſtly, Living honeſtly, and ſeeking after Truth, are the beſt Things which a Man can do, and the very Perfection of his Nature; by conſequence all that God, who is a good and reaſonable Being, can require of him.

I SHALL conclude this Paper, which I have written in behalf of Chriſtianity, and againſt Antichriſtianiſm, with another Divine Saying of our Bleſſed Saviour: *He that ſpeaketh of himſelf, ſeeks his own Glory; but he that ſeeks his Glory that ſent him, the ſame is true, and no Unrighteouſneſs is in him.* As if he had ſaid, "Hereby you may diſtinguiſh one that "comes from God, from an Impoſtor: If "any Man ſeek his own Glory and Authority, "you may conclude, that God has not ſent "him; but whatever he pretends, that he "ſpeaks of himſelf, preaches himſelf, and from "himſelf: But he that ſeeks the Honour of "God, and not his own Intereſt, Advantage "and Authority, by directing Men to the Au-"thority of God alone; that Man has no Falſ-"hood, no Deſign to deceive; you may conclude "him to be no Deceiver or Impoſtor."

C.

The

The following QUERIES, *and* LETTERS *to a Clergyman, written by the Author of the foregoing Paper, and never before printed, are thought proper to be here inſerted.*

QUERIES concerning *Authority in Matters of Faith.*

1. IS there any Authority among Men *in Matters of Faith?*

2. WHEREIN does that *Authority* conſiſt?

3. WHO are the Men that have that *Authority?* and particularly, Who are the Men that have that *Authority* in *China*, *Turkey*, *France*, *Scotland*, *England*, *Hanover*, *Holland*, and *Sweden?*

4. HAVE Men in one Country *Authority* over others in another Country *in Matters of Faith?* And who are thoſe Men that have that Authority?

5. ARE there any Perſons in the *Roman* Communion, who have *Authority*, *in Matters of Faith*, over the other Members of that Communion? And who are they?

6. ARE there any Perſons in the Communion of the Church of *England*, who have *Authority*, *in Matters of Faith*, over the other Members of that Communion? And who are they?

7. HAVE

7. HAVE any Perſons in the *Roman* Church *Authority, in Matters of Faith*, over the Members of the Church of *England*?

8. IF ſome Perſons of the Church of *England* have an *Authority, in Matters of Faith*, over the other Members of the Church of *England*; and if no Perſon of the *Roman* Church have ſuch an Authority over the other Members of the *Roman* Church; what Reaſon can be aſſigned, for giving ſuch *Authority* to ſome Perſons of the Church of *England*, over the other Members of the Church of *England*, that will not equally hold for giving ſuch Authority to ſome Perſons in the Church of *Rome*, over the other Members of the Church of *Rome*?

9. IF any Perſon in the *Roman* Church have now *Authority, in Matters of Faith*, over the other Members of the *Roman* Church; were there not Perſons in the *Roman* Church, who had ſuch Authority, before the *Reformation*?

10. HAVE private People in the *Roman* Church (that is, all but thoſe who have an Authority in Matters of Faith) any Right to oppoſe thoſe Perſons in the Exerciſe of their *Authority*, who have an *Authority in Matters of Faith* in that Church? Are not private People obliged to ſubmit to ſuch, exerciſing their Authority?

11. HAVE

11. HAVE private People in the Church of *England* any Right to oppoſe thoſe Perſons in the Exerciſe of their *Authority*, who have an *Authority in Matters of Faith*, in that Church? Are not private People obliged to ſubmit to ſuch, exerciſing their Authority?

12. HAVE private Men in all Churches a Right to judge, whether the *Matters of Faith* of their Church be erroneous or no?

13. HAVE private Men a Right to ſeparate from the Communion of a Church, whoſe *Matters of Faith* they judge to be erroneous?

14. HAVE private Men a Right to ſeparate from the Communion of all Churches, if they deem them all erroneous in *Matters of Faith*?

15. HAVE private People, ſeparating from the Communion of all Churches, as deeming them erroneous in Matters of Faith, a Right to form a new Church among themſelves? Or ought they to live without public Worſhip, and without being Members of any particular Church?

16. IF private Men have a Right to judge, whether the Matters of Faith received in their Church be erroneous or no; if they have a Right to ſeparate from the Communion of a Church, whoſe Matters of Faith they judge to be erroneous; and from all Churches, if they deem them erroneous in Matters of Faith:

And

And if private People have a Right to form a new Church upon ſuch Separation from all Churches: *What Authority in Matters of Faith* can there be in any Perſons of any Church?

17. WILL it not follow, from the Anſwers that ſhall be given to the foregoing Queries, either, that there can be *no Authority at all* among Men *in Matters of Faith*; or, that *all Authority in Matters of Faith* reſts in ſome Perſon or Perſons in the *Roman* Church?

18. IF there be *an Authority in Matters of Faith* in ſome Perſon or Perſons of the *Roman* Church; muſt not that Perſon, or thoſe Perſons, be *infallible* in the Exerciſe of it; that is, Is not *Infallibility* a Conſequence of *Authority*? Or, at leaſt, muſt not the ſaid Authority have the ſame Effect as Infallibility, namely, produce an intire Submiſſion of Mind and Actions in the People ſubject to the ſaid Authority?

19. IF there be *no Authority* among Men *in Matters of Faith*; and if every Man has a Right to judge for himſelf in Matters of Faith; Can the Civil Magiſtrate have a Right to enact by Law any *Articles* (meaning ſuch Articles as have no Relation to the Peace of Civil Society) as *Matters of Faith*, by rewarding Men to maintain them, and by puniſhing thoſe who oppoſe them, or any way putting them upon a worſe

worſe Foot for their Oppoſition, than other Subjects? Does he not hereby ſet up for an *Authority in Matters of Faith*, and invade the Right of *private Judgment*?

20. IF Men have a Right of *private Judgment in Matters of Faith*, Ought the Civil Magiſtrate to hinder them from being free and impartial in the Uſe of their private Judgment?

21. Is being rewarded for maintaining certain *Articles as Matters of Faith*, and being puniſhed, or ſuffering for oppoſing them, proper to produce a free and impartial Uſe of our Judgments, in relation to the Truth or Falſhood of thoſe *Matters of Faith*?

C.

A LETTER *to a Clergyman, ſhewing the* Impoſſibility of aſſenting to what we do not underſtand.

REVEREND SIR,

LAST Night I was ſurpriſed with yours of the 24th, relating to a Converſation between us at Mr. B——'s, (above a Year ſince) wherein you ſay, That *I maintained* ſeveral *Paradoxes*, the *main* whereof was, *That a Man cannot*

nnot poſſibly give his Aſſent to what he does t underſtand: But that *you might poſſibly fall rt in the Defence of what you eſpouſed*; and ſides, *was not ſolicitous* what *Anſwers* you gave e; and therefore now write to me to prove e Falſhood of the *Paradox* before-mentioned, d (if I think you fail in it) to deſire me *to* your *Miſtakes* before you.

I HAVE read over your Letter four or five nes, in order to comply with you; but not derſtanding what it is you ſay with reſpect the Point in queſtion, I cannot poſſibly do : For while I underſtand not, I can neither bmit to the Force of what you ſay, nor can give you any Anſwer to it. Underſtanding with me not only a neceſſary Part of religious lief, but ought to be an Ingredient in all aſoning, and common Diſcourſe; and I can more propoſe to talk about what I do not derſtand, than I can believe what I do not derſtand.

HOWEVER, determining to write to you, will endeavour to put you in the beſt Method Conviction I am able, though without any anner of Deſign to convince you. For I deſire u only to underſtand this Letter, as *a Letter r a Letter.*

SINCE you propoſed to convince me of the lſhood of a Propoſition which I advanced

and

and explained at large to you, your Buſineſs was to refute it in the Senſe which I explained it. But, as far as I can underſtand your Letter, you ſeem not to me to enter at all into the Queſtion.

FOR, *Firſt*, If you did, How could you make *my Aſſent to Relations of Matters of Fact done before I was born, and Relations of foreign Countries which I never ſaw*, to be proper Inſtances to convince me, that *I can't aſſent to what I do not underſtand*; and appeal to my *Experience* in the Caſe? which I muſt tell you is againſt you: And I aſſure you, That I know not, that I aſſent to any Propoſition about Facts, whether they be paſt or preſent, or about Things done at *Rome* or in *England*, but what I underſtand.

2*dly*, IF you did enter into the Queſtion, How could you imagine it incumbent on me to ſhew, *That whatever bears no Relation to my Underſtanding, can bear none to any other*? What has *that* to do with the Queſtion in Diſpute? The Queſtion in Diſpute is as conſiſtent with our Ignorance of Ten thouſand Things that exiſt, and with the Suppoſition of other Beings knowing more than we do, as any Propoſition that can be advanced, and by no means ſuppoſes our Knowledge to reach the Extent of Things. What I affirm is, "That what

"cannot

cannot be underſtood by me, cannot be expreſſed to me in a Propoſition; and what cannot be expreſſed to me in a Propoſition, cannot be aſſented to by me."

3*dly*, IF you entered into the Queſtion, How uld you imagine theſe Words of St. *Paul*, *know in part, and we propheſy in part*, to *deciſive againſt me*? Where is the Connection, *know in part, and we propheſy in part*; go, We can aſſent to what we do not underand? For my part, I am ſo much a Stranger this way of arguing, that the Connection is to as remote, as if you had argued; *I am a ine of the Church of* England, *as by Law bliſhed: Ergo*, The Laity muſt aſſent to what cannot underſtand.

UT to proceed to what I principally in: The Propoſition which you call a *Pax*, is, in my Opinion, ſelf-evident to thoſe are capable of Thinking, and underſtand the Terms; is the Foundation of all Diſſe and Reaſoning; and unleſs Two Men e in it, they want a common Principle reby to diſcourſe and reaſon with one an, unleſs Diſcourſe among Men be like Diſſe among Jack-daws and Parrots, mere ds without Senſe or Meaning (which I is an Opinion I am not very remote from); therefore I can think of no better way than

than to explain the Propoſition in ſuch a manner as you may underſtand it: And if what I ſay ſuppoſes the Thing in Diſpute; *viz. That you muſt underſtand* what I ſay, *before you can aſſent* to it; I cannot help it, till I can find out a way to inform you without making you underſtand.

1. ALL Aſſent, whatever, is to ſome Propoſition.

2. ALL Propoſitions whatever, whether they relate to Speculations or Matters of Fact, conſiſt of Words or Terms that have each of them a diſtinct Meaning; and every Propoſition muſt at leaſt have Three Words or Terms, the Extremes whereof are either denied or affirmed to have ſome Agreement with one another.

3. ASSENT to a Propoſition is an Aſſent to the Meaning, or the Thing ſignified by the Terms of a Propoſition, and to no more than is ſignified by the Terms.

4. KNOWING the Meaning of the Terms of a Propoſition, is what I call underſtanding a Propoſition.

ALL this I take to be ſelf-evident with Relation to all Propoſitions, whether they proceed from God or Man, whether they teach a Matter of Fact or Speculation; and to put it in a way of apprehending it, I will put The

Ca

Caſes, which will comprehend the whoſe Diſ-
pute abont Myſteries.

Firſt, SUPPOSE God, for the Information of
all Mankind, cauſes a Book to be publiſhed in
Welſh, which, among others, contains the fol-
lowing Propoſition, *Three diſtinct Perſons, Father,
Son, and Holy Ghoſt, (each of which is perfect
God by himſelf) conſtitute one God.* Now the
State of my Mind, with reſpect to this Caſe,
while I underſtand not the Senſe of the Words
in *Welſh*, is, that I am ignorant of the *Meaning*
of God's Words, and conſequently, do not aſſent
to that Meaning, which is ſignified by them;
but knowing God to be Truth itſelf, as ſoon as
I do underſtand what God ſays, I am ready to
give my Aſſent to it.

2dly, LET the Propoſition be in *Engliſh*, the
Caſe is juſt the ſame. If the Terms are uſed
in Ten thouſand Senſes, and no Two *Engliſh*
Authors agree in putting the ſame Senſe or
Meaning on them, and God does not any-where
declare what he means by thoſe Terms, I am as
much at a loſs as if he ſpoke in *Welſh*, and muſt
only ſay, that I am ready to aſſent as ſoon as I
know to what.

Thirdly and *Laſtly*, LET us ſuppoſe, that God
publiſhes the foregoing Propoſition, and does
at the ſame time only give us a partial and in-
adequate Conception of the Meaning of the

Terms, in reſpect of what they ſignify in the Minds of Angels, and other Beings more enlightened than ourſelves: It is evident, that our Aſſent can only be to what God thinks fit us reveal; what he with-holds from us, is not ſignified to us by thoſe Terms; and as to that dark Part, we can only profeſs our Ignorance, and be ready to aſſent to more whenever he reveals more. And here I think it proper to anſwer a Queſtion you put to me, *Whether I admit* or aſſent to *any thing as true or probable, which is not in all its Parts the Object of my Underſtanding?* To which I anſwer, That ſo much Senſe and Meaning as is conveyed to me about any thing by the Terms of a Propoſition, I may admit or aſſent to as true or probable: But that Part of any thing which is not conveyed to me by the Terms of a Propoſition, is not a Part of a Propoſition to me, and by conſequence not the Subject of Aſſent.

So that, upon the Whole, I take it to be clear ſelf-evident Matter of Fact, that *a Man cannot poſſibly aſſent to what he does not underſtand*; and by conſequence, all perfectly *myſterious Propoſitions*, and ſo much of any Propoſition as is *myſterious*, are Matters about which we can exerciſe no other Act of our Minds but of Humility, in profeſſing our Ignorance, and a Readiness to be informed about them.

PURSUANT

PURSUANT to theſe Notions, I readily profeſs to you, (and I think I may do it without Vanity, ſince it is all Mens Duty to be Chriſtians) That I think I underſtand all the fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Faith; and that hereby I am *ready to give a Reaſon of the Hope that is in me*, and defend it againſt all Objections; which I think every Man is the more able to do, with reſpect to any Cauſe, the better he underſtands it: But how any Man can think himſelf a Chriſtian, who owns that he underſtands not ſome of the Articles neceſſary to be believed to make him *one*; how he can preach Religion to others, which he profeſſes not to underſtand; that is, how he can make others underſtand what he does not underſtand himſelf; and how others can be perſuaded to think themſelves either the wiſer or the better for hearing what they don't underſtand, (one of which you muſt allow to be the End of Preaching) would be great Myſteries to me, did I not, by converſing with Mankind, ſee, that they generally conſiſt of Two Sorts, learned Parrots, and unlearned Parrots: To the firſt whereof, *Abſurdity* is the peculiar Privilege; and to the latter, *Ignorance*: For they have few or no Notions, and no Opportunity of taking thoſe *Academical Pains*, which are abſolutely neceſſary to make Men abſurd to any Degree.

ANOTHER Paradox that you fanſy I advanced was, *That the Diſtinction of Things above and contrary to Reaſon, is a Diſtinction without a Difference.* Whether I ſaid ſo or no, I remember not: But as to the *Diſtinction*, I anſwer briefly, That tell me clearly and diſtinctly what you mean by the Words, (for I underſtand not your Explication of them) and then I will tell you whether it be a Diſtinction without a Difference. Till you define the Terms, ſo that I can know what you mean, I can underſtand nothing by them, and by conſequence neither affirm nor deny any thing about that Diſtinction.

THOUGH your Letter contains ſo much which I do not underſtand, yet, for your Satisfaction, I will point out ſome Queſtions ſtarted by you, which I do underſtand: As,

Firſt, WHETHER I am ſincere or no (implied in theſe Words, that *You hope I am ſincere*).

2*dly*, WHETHER I was in Jeſt, or in Earneſt (implied in your doubting whether I was *ſerious* with you).

3*dly*, WHETHER I believe the Scriptures or no (implied in your ſaying, *If the Authority of St.* Paul *might decide the Controverſy, it muſt be ſilenced for ever*, &c.).

BUT

BUT theſe Matters being purely perſonal, nd no ways relating to the Queſtion, I give ou no Trouble about them. Beſides, they are f no Uſe in a private Letter, how good Argu-ents ſoever they may be thought to clear a oint in Divinity, either from the Pulpit or the reſs.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

C.

NUMBER XX.

Wedneſday, June 1. 1720.

Of Chaplains.

AS between the ſeveral Acts of the moſt grave and ſolemn Tragedies, it is allowed divert the Company with a Dance, or a Song, in this Paper, I ſhall deſcend to entertain

my Readers with a Diſſertation upon *Chaplains*, who are a Sort of expenſive Domeſtics, which none but great Families can entertain. How or when this venerable Piece of Houſhold-ſtuff became firſt in Uſe, is not certainly determined, that I know of; but it is certain that he is left intirely out of the Roll of Eccleſiaſtical Officers mentioned in the *New Teſtament*; his Uſe and Importance being not thought of, or forgot to be mentioned, by St. *Paul*, though not by Mr. *Collier*, who has ſupplied the Omiſſion of the Apoſtle, and diſcovered the ſame.

IT is likely, That *Chaplains* were firſt invented and brought into Faſhion, in the dark and barbarous Ages; and ſo Cuſtom has continued what Ignorance began. To theſe Days of Darkneſs is owing the marvellous Increaſe of lazy Monks, and cheating Friers; in which black Swarm of Reverend Idlers, probably firſt crept in this *ſupernumerary Levite*. It is well known, that worthleſs and deſigning Prieſts have always advanced and nouriſhed Superſtition, being very ſenſible, that it would in Return nouriſh and multiply Them. Thus Prieſt-craft and Bigotry beget each other; and being ſo near a-kin, perpetually maintain the mutual Relation.

THE

THE Office of a *Chaplain* is, according to Mr. *Collier*, to Pray for, Bleſs, and give Abſolution to thoſe he is concerned for ------ "All "which, *ſays he*, are Acts of Authority and "Juriſdiction." If this laſt Aſſertion be true, it is enough to deſtroy all Charity; ſince at this rate of Reaſoning, I ought to be afraid of throwing a Farthing to an Alms-woman, leſt ſhe ſhould be thereby provoked to Pray for and Bleſs me, and by that means acquire Juriſdiction over me. And who would not rather deny his Charity, than give away his Liberty?

TO ſhew that Mr. *Collier* is very much in Earneſt in beſtowing this ſame Authority upon his his *Domeſtic Parſon*, he puts a Rod in his Hand againſt the Maſter of the Family himſelf, whom, it ſeems, it is his Right to counſel, exhort and reprove; which Offices, he ſays, are "inconſiſtent with the Condition of a "Servant." The Chaplain therefore is, in the firſt Place, a much Wiſer Man, as well as a more Holy, than my Lord is; and in the ſecond Place, it is his Duty to owe my Lord no Duty at all in the Capacity of a Servant to a Superior.

AFTER he has put the Clergy in "joint "Commiſſion with the Angels themſelves," as he ſays God has done; it is no wonder that

he will not allow the meaneſt of them to be any Man's Servant, how great ſoever. He therefore reaſons againſt the 13th of *Henry* VIII. becauſe it calls the *Patrons of Chaplains their Maſters*. If ſome of them " formerly were " Stewards and Clerks of the Kitchen to " People of Diſtinction," as he ſays Biſhop *Latimer* complains ſome of them were forced to be in his Time; I cannot ſee for all that how they could, according to Mr. *Collier*, ſuffer by it in their Dignity and Reputations; becauſe, for as good Reaſons as before, their gathering the Rent, and going to Market for Proviſion, might give them Juriſdiction over the Perſon who employed them. I cannot therefore join with ſome of the Critics in cenſureing the Author of the *Scornful Lady*, for diſpatching *Parſon Roger* in a Morning, with his Basket under his Arm, to ſcour the Roofts, and gather Eggs; the ſame being a primitive Branch of his Office, if we may believe the aforeſaid Biſhop.

BUT though " People, miſapprehending the " Prieſt's Office, entertain a *Chaplain* upon the " ſame Account they do their Footmen, only " to garniſh the Table, and ſtuff out the Figure " of the Family" (*Collier's* Eſſays, *Part* I. *p.* 204, 205.); yet " for a Patron to account " ſuch a *Conſecrated Perſon his Prieſt*, as if he " belonged

" belonged to him as a Servant, is, in effect, to " challenge Divine Honours, and to ſet himſelf " up for a God" (*p.* 207.). Mr. *Leſley* puts the ſame Thing ſtronger, in fewer Words, and will not ſuffer any Man (Prince or Subject) to ſay, *my Parſon*, or *my Chaplain*, in any other Senſe than we ſay, *my King*, or *my God*.

So that, in the Sentiments of theſe Reverend Gentlemen, every one who hires a Chaplain, hires a Maſter. Take Warning then, O ye rich Men, Nobles, and Princes of the Earth; and due Submiſſion and Allegiance pay unto theſe your *Spiritual Sovereigns*, whom you have taken into your Service to be your *Superiors*; and to whom you give *Bread* and *Wages* to exerciſe DOMINION over you.

AFTER all, Mr. *Collier* is ſo good as to allow " the Maſter of the Family, in the Abſ- " ence of the Prieſt, to ſupply his Place, as " far as *lawfully he may*, that is, in Praying " and giving Thanks at Meat" (*p.* 200). But he muſt not Pray to God to Bleſs his Family, and to forgive them their Sins; for this would be to *Uſurp* the *Authority* of *his Lord*, the *Chaplain*.

BEFORE I have done with Mr. *Collier*, I would ask him one Queſtion, and that is, Whe- ther the Chaplains of Biſhops are of the ſame ſuperior Importance and Authority with the

Chaplains of Laymen; becauſe the Biſhops themſelves are qualified to be their own Chaplains; if the ſaying of Domeſtic Prayers, and Bleſſing their own Table, is allowed by him to be conſiſtent with their Eccleſiaſtical Dignity?

MILTON, though otherwiſe a Man of great Parts and Merit, yet wanting either the Senſe or the Grace to ſee the Uſefulneſs and Excellency of theſe adopted Sovereigns, ſpeaks of them with too much Contempt. He ſays that "In State perhaps they may be liſted among "the upper Serving-men of ſome great Houſ-"hold, and be admitted to ſome ſuch Place as "may ſtyle them the Sewers or the Yeomen-"Uſhers of Devotion, where the Maſter is too "reſty, or too rich, to ſay his own Prayers, or "to bleſs his own Table." (*Vol.* ii. of his Works in *Folio*, p. 509.)

BUT this was the Caſe only in his Time; for a *Chaplain* now-a-days is looked upon as a more honourable Piece of Furniture. After a Coach and Six, the next Trappings of Domeſtic Grandeur are a Page, Plate, and a Parſon. He ſwells the Houſhold Pomp and Luxury, and is often taken for Pride more than Prayers. Formerly, his Appetite was uncourteouſly reſtrained; he was only permitted to riot in Roaſt Beef; and Sir *Crape* and the firſt Courſe were removed together. But now he

he has better Luck, having, for the moſt part, obtained a general Toleration for Cuſtard.

NOR are the Times mended with Mr. *Chaplain* in one Inſtance only: In Days of Yore he was humbly content with *Abigail*, and my Lady's Woman was thought a ſuitable Match for the *Houſhold Prieſt* (as Mr. *Collier* Chriſtens him); but now he does not make that Uſe of her, but leaves her, and flies at higher Game. If my Lady be ſingle, the Doctor has a Chance for making his Fortune; and when he cannot marry her, he can ſometimes ſell her: of which I could give Inſtances, but for the Regard which I bear to the Quality and the Prieſthood. If my Lady be already married, he has ſtill Happineſs and good Fortune in his Eye, provided ſhe be but Young; and even though ſhe be Old, provided but Superſtitious and Bigotted: ſo that whether her Perſon be agreeable, or her Underſtanding crazy, he has his Ends; for he has a *Parſon's Barn*, and nothing comes amiſs.

IT muſt be owned farther, that a *Chaplain* in a Great Family is a uſeful Body for moſt Purpoſes, except that of his Function: He is often a facetious Perſon, and his Jokes and Puns keep the upper Part of the Family in a good Mood; for, as to the *Inferior*, he deigns not to ſpeak to them; unleſs to inſult them, and thereby teach them the great Reſpect which they

they owe him. He moreover graciouſly condeſcends to pay into all the Actions and Behaviour of the Servants, by which he keeps them in Obedience and Fear, at leaſt of himſelf.

Scire volunt ſecreta domus, atque inde timeri.

BESIDES, he is ſo courteous, that he meddles with all Family-Affairs, unasked; and interpoſes with his Counſel and Authority, unthanked. From hence it comes, that he and the Steward can never agree: For the Steward (like a ſaucy Layman, as he is) will be pretending to know his own Buſineſs as well as Mr. *Chaplain*, who is a *Conſecrated Perſon*. The Family therefore is eternally divided into Two Factions between them, but the *Doctor* has the Secret of ſecuring the Women on his Side, and ſo always gets the Better.

THE Doctor is likewiſe a conſiderable Perſon for divers other Arts and Accompliſhments. He throws a Bowl with more Skill, and follows it with more Activity, than any Man (not in Orders) upon the Green. He is alſo a truſty Toper in the Family: He has an uncommon Palate in the Diſcernment of Liquors, and an uncommon Zeal for their Conſumption. Nor is his great Dexterity at Whisk of trivial Moment: His Talent in this Branch of his Duty is ſo ſignal, that my Lady ſeldom fails chuſing, or rather

rather requiring him for her own Partner, if he be not altogether ſnapped up by the Daughter for hers.

AFTER all this, who can wonder that our *Houſhold Prieſt* holds up his Head, and adores himſelf? He is an hourly Witneſs of his own Importance and Figure; and finding himſelf an extraordinary Body, it is nothing ſtrange, that he demands extraordinary Treatment. As little to be admired is the Erectneſs of his Mien, and the dignified Primneſs of his Manner; how elſe ſhould he be himſelf, and differ from all other Men? His Authority, and the Cuſtom of the Cloth, give him a Right to Contradiction; and if he love State and courtly Pomp, What Layman does not? If he hate to ſee a Brother peeping through Timber, or wriggling in a String, who can blame the Workings of Self-love? If the *German Princes* are under his Diſpleaſure for ſacrilegiouſly admitting their Pages to ſay Grace; ſo are all they who make bold to cut their own Corns, under the Frowns of that famous Artiſt *Don Saltero* of *Chelſea*.

To conclude with a grave Paragraph; I am afraid it too often happens, that this ſame *Houſhold Prieſt*, who is taken into a Family to ſanctify it, proves a Diſturber of its Repoſe, and a Foe to its Welfare. He is a Spy upon the Wealthy and the Great, for the ill Ends of his Order. If he

has

has the Ear of his Patron, he can, by alarming his Conſcience, or ſtroaking his Vanity, influence him to turn the Patrimony of his Children into a Gift to the Altar: And ſo a Family of Innocents are ſtreightened, or ruined, to inlarge the Pride and Income of a worthleſs Vicar, or to rear up a graceleſs Mob, for the Intereſt and Support of Prieſtcraft and Slavery. So that the Public itſelf ſuffers in no ſmall Degree from the malignant Influence which deſigning *Chaplains* have in Great Houſes. How many Noble Families are by them inflamed with an unſocial Bitterneſs of Spirit, againſt all thoſe who inoffenſively think for themſelves; and are tainted with the vile Principles of Vaſſalage to any Authority, civil or ſacred, which theſe their Spiritual Governors ſhall plead for!

P. S. THIS Paper being intended to expoſe the ridiculous Privileges claimed in Behalf of Chaplains, as if they were of Divine Inſtitution; and the ill Uſe which they make of their Influence over weak Minds: Nothing here ſaid is meant againſt any Gentleman's taking into his Family a pious and agreeable Clergyman, under the Title of a Chaplain; who, if he poſſeſſes an honeſt and beneficent Heart, with Affability and good Breeding, is, no doubt, an amiable Character. But as to thoſe little, ſour, unbred Bigots, whom I have frequently ſeen in that

that Station, I do not think, that they ought to be admitted into the Converſation of Gentlemen, or ſuffered to have any Concern, either with their Children or Servants.

G.

NUMBER XXI.

Wedneſday, June 8. 1720.

A Compariſon *between the* High-Church *and the* Quakers.

THE Clergy of our National Church are Spiritual Officers, appointed by Order of the Civil Magiſtrate (like Churchwardens, Overſeers of the Poor, Conſtables, and other Pariſh-Officers) to act according to his Law, which is their Rule, and which has interpreted the Bible for them in the Thirty-nine Articles, Homilies, Liturgy, Canons, Injunctions, and other Inſtitutions. The chief Deſign of their Appointment is to inſtruct Men in Religion and Morality, or to make Men wiſer and better than they would be without their Aſſiſtance.

To

To that End they are hired, and paid a great Revenue; which, by the means of Lands, Tythes, Rents, Salaries, Fees, and Perquiſites, is ſuppoſed to amount to Two Millions *per Annum*; wherein they greatly differ from the aforeſaid Pariſh-Officers, who perform many real Services to Society without any particular Reward, as is, in many Caſes, the certain Duty, which Men of the ſame Society owe to one another. But as making Men wiſe and good, are the very beſt Things which can be done for them, both in relation to their Condition in this World, and the next: So every Man ought to think this Revenue *well beſtowed*, if Men are made more *wiſe* and *good* in any Proportion to the Charge; and on the other Side *ill beſtowed*, if Men are not in the leaſt improved in Knowledge and Virtue; much more, if they are rendered *more ignorant*, and *worſe*, by the Teaching and Influence of their Guides.

WE are juſtly concerned how we part with our Money in other Caſes, how it is laid out and managed, and whether what we receive in lieu of it be worth our Money, eſpecially when the Sum is conſiderable. It is therefore of great Importance to us to conſider the State of this Affair, wherein ſo much is expended; that, in caſe the Clergy do not anſwer the Ends of their Calling, and not deſerve their Revenues,

nues, we may take proper Meaſures to make them do ſo: for it is in the Power of us of the Laity, who almoſt wholly chuſe and conſtitute the Legiſlature, to make the Clergy uſeful; and it is either through our Ignorance, or Knavery, or both, if we do not make them uſeful.

Now it ſeems to me, that the Toleration or Liberty of Conſcience granted by Law in *England*, gives us an Opportunity of examining this Matter, beyond what can be done in *Popiſh* or other Countries, where no ſuch Toleration is allowed. We have a numerous Sect, or People among us, diſtinguiſhed by the Name of *Quakers*, who have no Spiritual Officers, with any Wages, Hire, or Salary, whoſe peculiar Buſineſs it is to Teach; but every Man among them does freely of himſelf, and *gratis*, communicate his Knowledge, both publicly and privately, according to his Ability, whenever he judges it proper ſo to do: And therefore we may eaſily make a Compariſon in the Caſe, between the Wiſdom and Virtue of the common People of the National Church, and the Wiſdom and Virtue of the *Quakers*, (who have no Quality or Gentry among them; but conſiſt of Tradeſmen, Artificers, Farmers, Servants, and Labourers) and thereby make a juſt

juſt Judgment, whether the Two Millions *per Annum* are *well* or *ill* beſtowed.

NO Man will deny, that the *Quakers* are born with the ſame natural Parts as the Churchmen. It will alſo be manifeſt, that they improve their natural Parts by the Knowledge of what the Clergy eſteem the moſt important and ſublime Points of Religion, under their general, diffuſed, *unhired* Miniſtry; equally at leaſt with the Members of the Church, under the Direction of their Clergy, *hired* for Wages: For by free Converſation with both Sorts, you will find, that the *Quakers* underſtand as well the Nature and Attributes of God, the Doctrines of the Trinity in Unity, the Satisfaction, the Incarnation of God, and other ſuch Points, and expreſs themſelves as clearly about them, as Churchmen; and I preſume, that this Matter will appear ſo clear, as not to admit of the leaſt Doubt. I do confeſs, that the *Quakers* have ſome *Errors*, (for what Man is or can be free from Error?) But as to thoſe Errors, I think Two Things may be offered in Excuſe of them.

FIRST, I obſerve in general, with the moſt ingenious and Reverend Mr. *NORRIS*, (in his *Two Treatiſes of Divine Light*, Tract II. *p.* 32.) who ſays, *That he cannot think* Quakeriſm *inconſiderable, as the Principles of it are laid*

laid down and managed by Mr. BARCLAY. That great and general Contempt they lie under, does not hinder him *from thinking the Sect of the* Quakers *to be far the moſt conſiderable of any that divide from the Church, in caſe the* Quakeriſm *that is generally held, be the ſame with that which Mr. BARCLAY has delivered to the World for ſuch; whom he takes to be ſo great a Man, that* he *profeſſes freely, that he had rather engage againſt an Hundred BELLARMINS, HARDINGS, and STAPLETONS, than with One BARCLAY.*

SECONDLY, I obſerve, that the *Quakers* ſeem very excuſable in reſpect to ſeveral of the Errors wherewith they are charged; and that their Neighbours, if they would do as they deſire to be done unto, may juſtly pardon them. For, as to their Opinions about Tythes, and paying Wages to Clergy, (which are deemed fundamental Errors, and judged by the Clergy in their Books againſt the *Quakers* to be a ſort of *Atheiſm*) they have it to ſay in their Excuſe, that *Tythes*, which were a Part of the ritual Law of the *Jews*, are, as ſuch, aboliſhed under the Goſpel, which has repealed the whole ritual Law. It ſeems alſo ſtrange to them, that *Embaſſadors*, (as the Clergy pretend to be) or *Negotiators*, ſhould claim Money from thoſe to whom they are ſent; that it appears more

more ſtrange, that the Clergy, who pretend to be Succeſſors in Embaſſadorſhip to *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, ſhould claim Tythes or Money; and thereby ſuppoſe our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf, and his Apoſtles, to have begun that Claim: Therefore they allege, that if the Clergy are only voluntary Embaſſadors or Negotiators, they ought to bear their own Charges; and if only *Miniſters* or Servants, they ſhould be paid their Wages by thoſe who *hire* them, and not claim an independent Maintenance; and herein they pretend to follow the Primitive Chriſtians, *who* (according to the Reverend and Learned Dr. *REEVES*, in his *Apologies*, &c. Vol. I. *p.* 44.) *would not pay Taxes for the Maintenance of the Heathen Temples.* And indeed, there is no Colour to make Tythes due *Jure Divino*, that Point being fully determined on the Side of the *Quakers*, by that accompliſhed Scholar and Divine, Dr. *Prideaux*, in his *Original* and *Right of Tythes*; and beſides, it is a Matter of Conteſt among the Clergy, to which Sort of them an independent Maintenance does by Divine Right belong.

As to the *Quakers* Doctrines of Paſſive Obedience, or taking patiently all manner of Affronts and Injuries, and refuſing to bear Arms on any Occaſion; it is known, that herein they follow St. *JUSTIN MARTYR*, *ORIGEN*, *TER-*

TERTULLIAN, St. *CYPRIAN*, *LACTANTIUS*, St. *BASIL*, *SALVIAN*, and others the moſt Learned and Antient of the Primitive Fathers.

AND as to their Principle *of not Swearing at all*, they follow *the Fathers of the Five Firſt Centuries*, *who* (according to the moſt learned Dr. *WHITBY*, in *Diſſert. de Script. Interp.* p. 164.) *all agreed, that Oaths of all Kinds were Unlawful to Chriſtians*; thoſe Fathers underſtanding our Saviour's Words, *Swear not at all*, univerſally; which, indeed, ſeem ſuited to the Notion, as they were the very Language, of the *Eſſenes*, a Sect of *Jews* in our Saviour's Time, who maintained all Oaths to be unlawful.

IT will be difficult to find one *Quaker* that cannot read, unleſs he has been educated and bred up in the Church, and became a Convert to *Quakeriſm*: Whereas I will venture to affirm, that Half the Common People of the Church, eſpecially in the Country, cannot read a Word.

THE *Quakers* are great Readers of the Bible; and it is their Principle to endeavour to *make the Beſt* of that Divine Book; which, though containing infinite Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, yet as it is a perfect Rule of Faith to the whole Word, is a plain and moſt intel-

intelligible Book, and muſt naturally improve the *Quakers*, more than it does thoſe Churchmen, who either cannot read, or do not read the Bible at all, or not ſo much as the *Quakers*; or that think they are *not to make the Beſt of their Bibles without any Reſtraint.* I dare to be ſo unfaſhionable as to aſſert, that the Bible may, and will, improve the Readers thereof; notwithſtanding Dr. *SOUTH* ſays of a Part of that Holy Book, that it *either finds Men mad, or makes them ſo*; and that Dr. *REEVES*, in Derogation of its Divine Precepts, thinks fit to ſuppoſe, that *Quakers*, by reading the Bible, become *ſtark Bible-mad* (*Preface to Apologies*, &c. *p.* 11.).

BUT there is one Point wherein the *Quakers* greatly exceed the Churchmen in Underſtanding, and whereof the meaneſt among them is firmly perſuaded; and that is, that *Every Man is to judge for himſelf in Matters of Religion*: Whereas few Churchmen are clear, as Men, Chriſtians, and Proteſtants, ought to be in this Matter; which is the Foundation of all good Senſe, Chriſtianity, and our glorious Reformation from the *Worſt Prieſtcraft*, POPERY. This Principle naturally produces Knowledge. For the Uſe of the Underſtanding improves the Faculty; as delivering up the Underſtanding to Prieſts or Guides, ſinks and debaſes

debaſes it. And accordingly the *Quakers* reaſon and act very nicely in their Affairs, as a Politic Body, in relation to Marriage, Orphans, Care of their Poor, *&c.* and Particulars among them; underſtand Trade, and the Buſineſs of the World, and how to live in it, as well as any Men whatſoever.

As to the Compariſon, which are the *Beſt* Men, *Quakers* or Churchmen; I ſuppoſe, it will not be denied, but that the *Quakers* are as good Men; as good in their Families; as good Neighbours; as Quiet, Temperate, Chaſte, Sober, free from Paſſion, Induſtrious; as clear from the groſs Crimes which fill the Gaols, and expoſe Men to the Pillory and Hanging; as Charitable in their Sentiments to thoſe who differ from them; as great Enemies to Perſecution; as true to Liberty and Property, as any Churchmen; and, in fine, as good Subjects, and as loyal to King *GEORGE*, (though Loyalty be the diſtinguiſhing Principle and Glory of our Church) as any profeſſed Follower of Dr. *SACHEVEREL*, *LUKE MILBOURNE*, or other ſwearing loyal Divine.

SINCE, therefore, it is undeniably evident, that the *Quakers* are at leaſt as *wiſe* and as *good*, *without* any Charge to the Public, as Churchmen are *with it*; I conceive that it is incumbent on every one, who does not envy

the Clergy their Preferments, to endeavour to find out ſome other Way to make them as uſeful as poſſible to Mankind, and to put them upon ſuch an Eſtabliſhment as may enable them to deſerve all their Power and Riches; which ſhall be the Subject of ſome future Papers.

C.

NUMBER XXII.

Wedneſday, June 15. 1720.

Prieſtcraft *corrupts every thing, and perverts the Uſe of Words.*

POETS tell us, that *Midas* changed every thing which he touched into Gold, and *Meduſa*'s Head, every one who ſaw it, into Stone. But Prieſtcraft is yet of a more miſchievous Nature; for That converts all who come within its Influence into Idiots or Lunatics; and every Virtue or good Quality of the Mind into Non-ſenſe or Roguery.

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EVERY Creature and Plant aſſimilate the ood or Nouriſhment which they receive, into eir own Subſtance: The Toad converts into oiſon the ſame Juices, of which the Bee makes oney: The ſame Breath, blown into different ſtruments, makes good or harſh Muſic; it no wonder therefore, if that which is all orruption itſelf, ſhould corrupt and ſpoil ery thing elſe which touches or comes ear it.

IT has ſo mangled and perverted the Signi- cation of Words, and the Nature of Things, at Language is rendered uſeleſs, or rather a are to Mankind: There is ſcarce a Sound an Action, which has received the Stamp a general Approbation, that has not loſt its eaning; and is ſtript of all Honeſty to be- me Orthodox, and be made free of the *red Society*, as the *Popiſh* Prieſts are pleaſed to l themſelves.

A BECOMING Zeal for the Glory of God, ich ought to be a fervent Diſpoſition of ind to promote Holineſs and Virtue amongſt en, by Softneſs, Perſuaſion, and Example, now nothing but Party-Rage, an implacable furious Hatred, and the Denunciation of e and mortal War againſt all, who do not ieve juſt the ſame with us, and cut their rns as we do: Moderation is become a

Vice, and eſteemed to be Lukewarmneſs, an an Indifference to Religion and Goodneſs.

AN obſtinate Bent of Mind, and a determ nate Reſolution to adhere to Opinions, t Truth of which we have never examined, nev intend to examine, and for the moſt pa are not able to underſtand if we did, is wh is called Conſtancy in the Faith; and to bu ourſelves, or to fight with our beſt Friends we can burn them, paſſes for Heroic and Chriſti Courage.

WE muſt ſhut out the Sun at Noon Summer's Day, to make uſe of Candle-ligh and give up all our Senſes, to ſubmit to f Authority. We are to believe every thing exact Proportion as we cannot underſtand or as it appears abſurd; and allow t alone to be true Faith, which contradicts firſt Principles of Science. Reaſon, the Light which God has given to Men, to ſtinguiſh Truth from Falſhood, Virtue fr Vice, Religion from Impoſture, is decri and the Uſe of it deemed impious and d gerous.

PERSECUTION of our Fellow-Creatu Fellow-Subjects, and Fellow-Chriſtians, for ing the beſt Actions which they are cap of doing, (that is, worſhipping God in the M ner which they think to be moſt acceptabl

him) is called ſerving the Almighty, and promoting his Religion. The ruining and deſtroying our Neighbours, (whom we are commanded to love as ourſelves) and cutting their Throats, is having Pity upon their poor Souls; and the acting againſt all the Dictates of Nature, and Precepts of the Goſpel, is Chriſtianity, and doing the Will of our Saviour.

ENTHUSIASTS, fanatical, melancholy, monkiſh, recluſe and ſequeſtred Perſons, are eſteemed *the Religious*; and are ſuppoſed to know the other World, in Proportion as they know little of this. Philoſophers, and Men of Wit or ſound Knowledge, are generally accuſed of Infidelity and Atheiſm: Nay, the cardinal Virtues themſelves cannot eſcape; but without the Belief of certain faſhionable Speculations, are accounted only *ſplendida Peccata*, and thoſe who poſſeſs them are treated with Ignominy; and indeed, none are thought fit for Heaven by Gentlemen of this Caſt, but ſuch as no Man of common Senſe would care to keep Company with upon Earth.

CELIBACY is eſteemed a Virtue in ſome Churches, and not diſcouraged in others; and the diſobeying the great Dictates of Nature, and the poſitive Command of God, *to increaſe and multiply*, is miſcalled Chaſtity; and the waſting our Time in running up and down

from Church to Chapel, from Chapel to Church to hear *Maſſes*, and idle Harangues, and being perfectly uſeleſs to Society, and good for no one Thing in the World, is called by the *Popiſh* Prieſts *Devotion* and *Godlineſs*; as if the Almighty could be any way ſerved but by doing good to his Creatures.

POORNESS and Dejection of Mind is call'd Meekneſs of Spirit; and a Readineſs to ſubmit to Injuries and Impoſitions is Chriſtian Humility; Stifling our Senſes is Submiſſion and Deference to Authority; and our beſt Searches and moſt ſincere Inquiries after Truth, are called the Deſires of Novelty, and curious and forbidden Studies: The doubting of any thing which our Guides think it their Intereſt to tell us, or ſhewing the Weakneſs of their Arguments is Scepticiſm, and renouncing the Faith; and a hearty Concern for the Honour of Almighty God and the Good of Men, is often interpreted to be downright Atheiſm; and to communicate with our Chriſtian Brethren, when we can do it with a good Conſcience, is Hypocriſy; unleſs we do it too when we think it ſinful.

AN Attempt to oblige the Clergy to keep the Laws, which they have ſworn to, and the Articles which they have ſubſcribed, is to oppoſe received Opinions, and to diſturb Points already ſettled. An Endeavour to preſerve our

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legal Conſtitution is Sedition, Faction, and being *given to Change*; and a generous Love for all Mankind, and the Liberty of our Country, with a noble Reſolution to venture Life, and all which is valuable here below, for that glorious Cauſe, is Rebellion, and worſe than the Sin of Witchcraft.

WASTING, macerating, and torturing our Bodies by Faſting and Penances, is ſanctifying our Souls; and to reject and throw back the Benevolence and bountiful Gifts of indulgent Providence, is to ſhew and pay our grateful Acknowledgments to his Goodneſs; as if he gave us any thing, not to uſe and enjoy it; but we were to accept theſe Bleſſings only in Truſt for the Clergy, and ſo live poorly our ſelves, that they may riot in Luxury, Profuſeneſs and Pride: Which they have ſeldom failed to do, when they have had the Means of doing it; carnal Things being obſerved beſt to ſuit with ſpiritual Minds.

PLAYING Monkey Tricks at Church paſſes amongſt the Papiſts for the Worſhip of God; and they go to ghoſtly Dancing-maſters to know how to accoſt Him faſhionably: The Failing in a Ceremony, the Omiſſion of a Bow, the not Filing to the Right or Left readily, or not Adjuſting their Motions to the Tune and Time of the Organs, are all dangerous Errors,

and ſavour much of Hereſy; and the *Worſhipping God in Spirit and in Truth* only, is Diſobedience to the Church, and little better, if not worſe, than Atheiſm: The decking up, and dreſſing of Churches, and giving the Deity fine Cloaths, is Decency, and doing him Honour.

CONSECRATION, which is the Appointment or Approbation of Places, Perſons, or inanimate Things, to be uſed only in the immediate Service of God, (and which may be ſo applied indifferently with any Ceremony, or with none at all) is turned by the *Romiſh* Prieſts into a ſort of Incantation or ſpiritual Juggling. By Virtue of a little Holy Water, looking towards the *Eaſt*, mumbling over a few cunning Words, certain Motions of the Hand and Head, and by the Force of Grimace and Mummery, the ſaid Places, Perſons and Things become ſacred, and the Holineſs is transferred from the Minds of the Communicants to the Ground, the Wainſcot, and the Carcaſs and Cloaths of the Prieſt; and ſo the Devotion due to Almighty God is changed into a ſenſeleſs Idolatry to as ſenſeleſs Men and Idols.

PRAYERS are turned by them into Curſes, and Sermons into Invectives and Libels: Benevolence and Good-will towards Men, and even Charity itſelf, which is comprehenſive of all

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the Virtues, and without which Faith and Hope ſignify nothing, and which is not confined to Perſons, Nations, or Languages, to Sects nor Opinions, but ought to be as free as the Elements, and diffuſive as the Animal Creation, is changed into Faction, Partiality, and often Profuſeneſs, to ſupport a Party, and a Combination againſt Mankind, who do not think and act as we do.

BUT no Parts of Speech have had ſo ill Fortune, as Scripture-Language, and even amongſt ſome Proteſtants: Appellatives, and the Names of complex Ideas, are often left untranſlated, that they may paſs for real Beings, and ſignify whatever the Prieſts have Occaſion for; and ſometimes, where they have been tranſlated, falſe or unfair Meanings have been aſſigned to them, and they have been made to convey a quiet different Senſe from what they import in Scripture: The Word *Eccleſia* or Aſſembly is tranſlated *Church*, which *there* always ſignfies the *Chriſtian People*, and in our Articles is defined to be the *Congregation of the Faithful*, but is now generally uſed only for the Clergy; and the Word *Epiſcopos* (which in *Engliſh* is *Overſeer*) is Engliſhed *Biſhop*; ſo that Women, and the ignorant Croud, are fully ſatisfied, that they have found in Scripture a *Lord of Parliament*, and a

Dioceſan Prelate, with a Mitre upon his Head, and a Croſier in his Hand; and whenever they hear or read the Word *Presbyter*, they fanſy they ſee a Parſon beating his Cuſhion in a Pulpit, and believe him to be *Jure Divino*: Inſtances of this kind are endleſs.

EVEN Literature itſelf is perverted, and inſtead of being made to improve Mens natural Faculties, is uſed to extinguiſh or ſtifle the firſt Principles of Knowledge. Seminaries have been erected and endowed to teach Men backward: The Youth, at a very great Expence, learn to be Blockheads, and accompliſhed Dunces; and ſpend the firſt and moſt improveable Part of their Manhood to be finiſhed in Folly. The Diſcovery of Printing, which brought about the *Reformation*, is uſed to deſtroy it; and, like the *Scotchman's Monkey*, is made to bite every one but him who has the ſole Cuſtody of the Machine.

OF all, or moſt of theſe Heads, I ſhall treat ſeparately, in order to undeceive Mankind, and to manumit them from the Fraud and Tyranny of *Popiſh* and popiſhly-affected Clergymen; by ſhewing, that they *now do*, and *ever did*, make uſe of all their Influence over the ſtupid and unhappy Laity, and of all the Power and Riches which they have been ever truſted with, to drive Religion and Virtue from

from the Face of the Earth; and therefore have always endeavoured to turn the worſt Things into the beſt, and the beſt into the worſt.

ONE Drop of Prieſtcraft is enough to contaminate the Ocean.

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NUMBER XXIII.

Wedneſday, June 22. 1720.

Of ZEAL.

I Do not know any Word, in any Language, which, next the Word *Church*, has ſo much Wickedneſs and Roguery to anſwer for, as the Word *Zeal*. It is indeed an important and dreadful Monoſyllable, which, when uſed with proper Geſtures and Emphaſis, can turn a Cut-throat into a Saint, and a Madman into a Martyr. It can commit Bloodſhed and Butchery with innocent Hands, deſtroy Life and Property with a good Conſcience, and diſpeople Nations with Applauſe.

TRUE Zeal is a ſincere and warm Concern for the Glory of God, and the Spiritual Welfare of Mankind. This Definition ſeems to me to take in every Idea which ought to be annexed to the Word *Zeal*; and ſhews it to be a Virtue full of Affection, Meekneſs, Humanity and Benevolence, and void of all Choler, Bitterneſs, Ill-will, and Severity. This is its Character; and whatever contradicts it, is not *Zeal*, but *Rage*.

ESPECIAL Care ought therefore to be taken, effectually to diſtinguiſh true Zeal from falſe, and the Thing from the Pretence of it. For if it be not well grounded, it falls under the Apoſtle's Cenſure of *a Zeal, which is not according to Knowledge*. Of the latter Sort is that with which crafty Men infatuate the credulous Multitude, who take their Religion upon Truſt, and their Faith and Zeal at ſecond Hand. Their Godlineſs conſiſts in Prejudices, and a Set of Names. They hate Diſſenters, becauſe they do not come to Church, and becauſe they are ſtrict Obſervers of the *Lord's-day*, and ſeek God without Book: And they are *zealous* for the Church; but if you ask them what they mean by it, you will find it to be either the Organs, the Ring of Bells, or the Parſon. They have a zealous Antipathy to a black Cloak, which is a certain Sign of a wrong Religion; and they have a doating Fondneſs for a black Gown, which is an infallible

fallible Mark of the true Church: They therefore abhor and inſult the former, and honour and bow down to the latter. This Temper and Behaviour in them are wonderful Demonſtrations of the Spirit of the Goſpel; and intitle them to the higheſt Favour and Approbation of their Spiritual Governors. At the time when Dr. *Sacheverel* was ſuffering the Law for Sedition, I asked one of his Mob, who was ſtraggling at ſome Diſtance from the reſt, in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, (as they were proceeding to demoliſh *Daniel Burgeſs*'s Meeting-houſe) What provoked him to ſo much Outrage againſt *Daniel*, and his Congregation? He anſwered, *Becauſe they had murdered King* Charles *the Firſt*. I then asked him, What he knew concerning King *Charles the Firſt*? *Why*, quoth he, *he was one of the Twelve Apoſtles; and* Dr. Sacheverel *is the beſt Friend he has in the World*. Here he ſwore a great Oath, and left me to pity the Ignorance and Frenſy of the inchanted Crowd.

IGNORANCE is the Mother of this ſort of *Zeal*, and Craft its Father: And as its Pedigree is vile, ſo is its Behaviour brutal and abominable. It is the Tool of Knavery and Deſign, and operates by Folly, Wickedneſs and Force. It is a Maſtiff uncoupled, and hallooed at Conſcience, Sobriety, and Peace; and ſet

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on to devour every good Quality, itſelf poſſeſſing none. It is rouſed by Lyes, and animated by Liquor. It combats Truth with Curſes, and Moderation with Blows. Its Courage is Madneſs, and it is bold through Blindneſs. It has never any Mercy upon others, and ſeldom upon itſelf. It takes the Word of its *Driver*; and miſtakes Miſchief for Merit, and his Word for God's. It is the moſt miſerable of all Slaves; it is blind, and it is diſtracted; and its only Freedom is to act Outrages, and ſhed Blood. It is neither bleſſed with Enjoyment nor Reſt. It boils with Anger; it burns with Envy; it is tortured with Hatred; it is hurried headlong by all the worſt Paſſions. It is incapable of Happineſs, and either deaf to Inſtruction, or undone by it: For the Moment it grows wiſer, it dies.

How often do Ambition and Deſign work their own impious Ends, under the plauſible Diſguiſe of ſanctified *Zeal!* Men are never weary of being deluded with Sounds; and a pious Word, artfully proſtituted, and devoutly pronounced, will at any time lure them into the groſſeſt Impoſtures, and puſh them on to commit the moſt inhuman Barbarities. Thus the Papiſts are firſt taught, that the Pope is a *Vice-God*, and the Repreſentative of *Jeſus Chriſt*; and that his *Zeal* for his own Revenues and Domi-

Dominions is *Zeal* for *Chriſt*, and his Church; and then it is an eaſy matter to perſuade theſe poor Slaves and Bubbles to adopt ſuch a Portion of the ſame *Zeal*, as will prompt them to poiſon, and murder, and plunder, and burn all thoſe unhappy Schiſmatics, who continue ſo, rather than abandon their Senſes, their Humanity, their Charity, and the Fear of God; all which are deſtructive of the Character of a *Zealot*. And thus both Papiſts and Proteſtants, being perſuaded by their Prieſts, that all who, either through Reaſon or Grace, think differently from the ſaid Prieſts, are in a State of Damnation, become further perſuaded, that becauſe they are to be damned, therefore they are to be undone; and ſo anticipate the Labour of the Devils, and add Miſery to the Miſerable. By this means, as *Satan* is the Almighty's Executioner, they make themſelves *Satan*'s; and ſuch *Zeal* is at once the Inſtrument and Qualification of a *Dæmon*.

WHEN I ſee a grave Doctor proudly urging upon his Hearers the *Divine Right of Epiſcopacy*, which is juſt of as much Importance to Mankind as the Divine Right of *Geography*; I ſee preſently into the Heart of the Man, and would lay any Wager, that he has a burning Zeal to ſucceed St. *Peter* in the Divine Revenue and Lordſhip of ſome human Dioceſe;

or elſe courts ſome Biſhop, with great *Zeal*, for his Lordſhip's Niece, or for a fat Benefice. And I cannot but own, that a Chriſtian *Zeal* for a Thouſand Pounds a Year, or even for Two Hundred Pounds a Year, or even for a rich Wife, gifted with a good Apoſtolic Fortune, is a very commendable and very prevailing ſort of *Zeal*; but I cannot ſee that it equally affects the whole Congregation. Pray, of what Moment is it to a harmleſs, well-meaning Flock of Sheep, whether their Shepherd be called *Paſtor* or *Overſeer*? or, Whether he have Twenty Pounds a Year Wages, or Twenty times as much? or, Whether he be hired by the whole Village? or only the chief Man of the Village? or, Whether he wear a plain *Hat*, or a *high crowned Cap*? or, Whether he wear *Linen* or *Woollen*? But it is of great Moment to them, whether he feed them or ſtarve them; or, whether he defend or plunder them; or, whether he utterly neglect them himſelf, or only leave them to the Care and Command of his Dog; or, whether he ſeek their Safety and Happineſs, or only their Fleſh, and their Fleeces.

BUT further: The Tempers of Men being either naturally warm, or quickly made ſo, it is eaſy to miſtake a hot Head for a devout Heart, and an angry Heart for a devout *Zeal*. But, alas! how different is the meek Spirit of the

the Goſpel, from that Fury which is raiſed by ſtrong Beer, or paſſionate Sermons! How little do Men conſider, that the ſame Arteries do often beat with equal Vigour for a Punk as for the Church, and occaſion broken Heads for the one as ſoon as for the other!

TRUE Chriſtian Divine *Zeal* is inſpired by God Almighty, and comes attended with every other Chriſtian Virtue, and ſubdues every unruly Paſſion. It is inſeparable from Charity, the higheſt *Chriſtian Grace*, and the chief Characteriſtic of a Chriſtian; that Charity *which wiſheth all Things, hopeth all Things*; which forgives all Men, but hurts none. It neither burns nor impriſons Men Bodies; nor plunders their Goods, nor rails at their Perſons, nor ſtirs up Miſchief againſt them, nor marks them out for Damnation. It is not raiſed by cruel Language, nor increaſed by Bottles of Brandy; it is modeſt, it is merciful, it is temperate, it is diſcerning.

ON the other hand; There is not in the World a more cruel, debauched, or more ignorant Paſſion, than falſe *Zeal*. It is void of Pity, of Grace, of Knowledge, and of Charity; it is outrageous; it delights in Blood; it commits Maſſacres, and murders *Innocents*; it diſpeoples Nations. Nothing can reſtrain it, neither Kindred nor good Qualities, nor Pity nor Tears.

Tears. It uſurps the Name of Religion, and deſtroys all Religion; it commits Abomination in a Style of Devotion, and talks Blaſphemy in the Name of the Lord. It proſtitutes God's Authority to deſtroy God's Works; and, in the Name of *Chriſt*, damns and deſtroys thoſe whom Chriſt died to ſave.

IF People would but look a little into their own Hearts and Conſtitutions, they would too often find, that their *Zeal* is only Anger, and that this hot Devotion reſides altogether in the Blood. I have long obſerved, that your choleric Fellows are your moſt zealous Fellows, and are always the warmeſt Churchmen; and that, amongſt the Ladies, the moſt amorous are ever the greateſt Bigots. He who is peeviſh at his Table, will be peeviſh in his Pulpit; and as highly offended at an ill Dinner, as at a Conventicle. I once caught a great fat Doctor at *St. Paul's*, curſing and ſtorming againſt *Presbyterians*, whom he conſigned in a Body over to *Satan*, with great Zeal, and no Remorſe. Says I, to myſelf, *This Reverend ill-tongued Parſon will certainly quarrel and kick over his Claret as well as over his Cuſhion.* In order to try, I got into his Company at the *Baptiſt's-Head*, and by the Humility of my Behaviour, and the Divinity of the *Hermitage*, I ſat at tolerable Eaſe with the Doctor, till the middle

middle of the third Bottle, and then he ſwore at the Drawer for not anſwering before he was called; and, before it was out, he drank Confuſion to *Fanatics*, and a Health to *Sorrel*. The Doctor then ſhewed a violent Appetite for Quarrelling; but meeting nobody in the ſame Humour, he only eaſed himſelf in Oaths; till an honeſt Citizen drank to him, The Glorious Memory of King *William*; which the Doctor pledged, by throwing a wild Duck juſt hot from the Spit, full in the Citizen's Face, and got up at the ſame time to fall upon him with his Hands; but as ſoon as he got up, he fell, and we left him upon the Floor, to the Care of the Drawers.

How long are Mankind to be deluded with Sounds? And how long will Uncharitableneſs and Outrage, which are Enemies to the Nature of Chriſtianity, paſs for *Zeal* for Religion? Are Men to be curſed, or puniſhed, or deſtroyed, out of *Zeal* for the Goſpel, by which all Severity is forbid? Where are we commanded to quarrel for the Peace of the Church? or to run mad for the Reaſonableneſs of Liturgies? or to fight for the *Divine Original* of *Human Forms*? or to deliver Men to the Devil, for the Saving of their Souls?

How unlike is our Modern *Zeal* to that of the Apoſtles, and how unworthy to be called by

by that Name! They lived under Hardſhips and Stripes, and ventured their Lives to convert Unbelievers: Our preſent Zealots live at Eaſe, and in Plenty: And their *Zeal* is devoutly employed about Tythes, Honours, Garments, and Forms. They do not pretend to venture their Livings, and their Lives, to convert either *Pagan*, or *Papiſt*, or *Mahometan*. The *Idolatry* and *Infidelity* under which the miſerable World lies, do not ſeem to interrupt their Quiet, and their Enjoyments. But if a Dozen harmleſs Chriſtians preſume to worſhip God in a Barn; or to pray to God without Book; or to commemorate *Chriſt*'s Death with Praiſes and Prayers, ſuch as a devout Heart dictates; or to refuſe complying with a Rote of Words, which they judge neither edifying nor warrantable; or to follow their Conſciences, which alone can juſtify them in the Sight of God; and not the Authority of Men, which cannot juſtify them in the Sight of God; they are alarmed: And their Church totters, if Conſcience be protected.

IF this be the Spirit of Chriſtianity, I muſt own myſelf to have been hitherto a Stranger to Chriſtianity; and yet theſe Men go on to tell us, that they are the only true Church, though they poſſeſs not one Grain of that Charity which diſtinguiſhes a Chriſtian from a Reprobate, as much as a rational Soul does a Man

Man from a Monkey; and to damn all other Churches, that is, the whole World, without taking one Step towards bringing them into a State of Salvation.

G.

NUMBER XXIV.

Wedneſday, June 29. 1720.

Of PERSECUTION.

THERE are but Two Ways of propagating Religion, namely, Miracles and Exhortation. The one depends upon Divine Power, and the other upon the Strength of Reaſon. Where the Finger of God appears, all further Teſtimony is needleſs; and where the Truth is obvious to Reaſon, Miracles are needleſs. God never wills us to believe that which is above our Reaſon, but he at the ſame time commands our Faith by Miracles. He does not leave neceſſary Things doubtful; and for this Reaſon alone it is, that Men are ſaid to be *left without Excuſe*.

EVERY

EVERY Point of Belief therefore muſt be ſupported either by Reaſon or Miracle, or elſe it is no Point of Belief at all. Both the *Jewiſh* and the Chriſtian Law were delivered and enforced with manifeſt Signs and Demonſtrations of God's extraordinary Preſence and Power. And it has been very juſtly boaſted of the Chriſtian Religion in particular, that it ſpread and proſpered by Miracles, Perſuaſion, and Clemency, in Oppoſition to Violence and Cruelty.

BUT when Chriſtianity became tainted and defaced by Prieſtcraft, it grew neceſſary to have many Points believed, which contradicted both Revelation and common Senſe: Therefore its *Foſter-Fathers*, who to the Worſhip of God added the Worſhip of themſelves, had no other way to prove their Syſtem but by Wrath and Vengeance. Reaſon was againſt them, and Miracles not for them: So their whole Dominion ſtood upon Falſhood, guarded by Force. This Force, when it is exerciſed upon a religious Account, is called *Perſecution*; which is what I am now to conſider and expoſe.

TO puniſh Men for Opinions that are even plainly falſe and abſurd, is barbarous and unreaſonable. We poſſeſs different Minds, as we do different Bodies; and the ſame Propoſition carries

carries not the ſame Evidence to every Man alike, no more than the ſame Object appears equally clear to every Eye. A choleric Temper, when it is not corrected with Reaſon, and ſeaſoned with Humanity, is naturally zealous. A phlegmatic Temper, on the other ſide, as it is naturally ſlow, ſo it is lukewarm and indifferent. Is there any Merit in having a warm Complexion, or any Sin in being dull?

BUT further, to puniſh a Man for not ſeeing the Truth, or for not embracing it, is, in the firſt place, to make him miſerable, becauſe he is already ſo; and in the ſecond place, to pluck Vengeance out of God's Hands, to whom alone it belongs, if we will take his own Word for it. If this Severity is pretended to be for his Good, I would ask, Is manifeſt Cruelty any Token of Kindneſs? or was it ever taken for ſuch? Does it not always increaſe the Evil, which it is employed to cure? Is Deſtruction the Means to Happineſs? Abſurd and terrible!

BUT what if, after all, the Perſon perſecuted ſhould be found an Adherent to Truth and Honeſty, and *his* Enemies ſhould prove *their* Enemies? Would not this be adding Cruelty to Falſhood, and heaping up Guilt with both Hands? This indeed is often the Caſe. And where it is not altogether ſo, the Perſecutors are ſtill inexcuſable. He who, in

the

the Search of Truth, does all that he can, does as much as he ought. God requires no more; and what Man dares do it, who fears Him? When *He* acquits, Who is it that condemns?

BESIDES, he that ſuffers, or at leaſt dies, for Religion, gives a Teſtimony by ſo doing, that his Conſcience is dearer to him than Eaſe or Intereſt: Whereas the Patrons of Perſecution have manifeſtly perſonal Motives and Self-Ends in it. It gratifies their Pride, awes Mankind, and brings them Obedience and Gain.

OUR bleſſed Saviour, who had no View but the Redemption of the World, never uſed his Omnipotence, or the leaſt Force, to ſubdue his Enemies, though he knew their Hearts to be malicious and implacable. He neither delivered them to Death nor the Devil, even for their helliſh Deſigns to kill him; much leſs for Points of Error or Speculation. He reaſoned with all Men; but puniſhed none. He uſed Arguments, he worked Wonders; but Severities he neither practiſed nor recommended. His was a different Spirit. He rebukes his Apoſtles with Sharpneſs, when, being yet full of the Spirit of this World, and void of the Spirit of God, they were for bringing down Fire from Heaven upon the *Heretical Samaritans*. The merciful Jeſus would not hurt theſe half Heathens, though they rejected him in

in Perſon; for he *came not to deſtroy Mens Lives, but to ſave them:* And they who take another Method, give the Lye to the Lord of Life, and diſown him for their Head.

HIS Apoſtles, as ſoon as they had received the Holy Ghoſt, grew wiſer and more merciful. They ſhewed by Miracles, that they were endowed with the Divine Power; but they never uſed either to compel or to burn, though they were beſet with falſe Teachers, and oppoſed by Gainſayers. They were ſo far from giving ill Uſage, that they never returned it. The Exerciſe of *wholſome Severities* was no Part of their Doctrine. Prayers and Perſuaſions were their only Arms, and ſuch as became the *Goſpel of Peace.*

THIS was the mild and heavenly Behaviour of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, towards thoſe who did not believe, or believed wrong; and it was followed by all their Succeſſors, who aimed at the Good of Souls. But thoſe who uſed the ſacred Function as a Ladder to Power and Gain, made a new Goſpel of their own Decrees, and forced it upon the World, partly by fighting, and partly by Curſing. The Apoſtles taught Chriſt, and their Succeſſors taught themſelves. It was not enough to believe the Doctrine of Chriſtianity, but you muſt believe it in Words of their inventing. To diſpute

their Decrees, though they contradicted common Senſe, and the Spirit of God, was Hereſy; and Hereſy was Damnation. And when, in conſequence of this, they had allotted a pious Chriſtian to eternal Flames, for his Infidelity in *them*, they diſpatched him thither with all Speed; becauſe he was to be damned in the *other* World, therefore he was to be hanged or burned in *this*. A terrible Gradation of Cruelty! to be curſed, burned, and damned! But it was ſomething natural; it began from perſecuting Prieſts, and ended in Hell, and the Devil was the laſt and higheſt Executioner.

THUS they became *Prelates* of both Worlds and Proprietors of the Puniſhments of both. Even where the Civil Sword was not at their Command, their Vengeance was as ſucceſsfully, and, in my Opinion, more terribly, executed without it, by the temporal Effect of their Excommunication. For the Perſon under it was looked upon as a Dæmon, and one in the Power of the Devil; and ſo driven out, like a wild Beaſt, from all the Comforts of Life, and human Society; to periſh in a Deſart, by Hunger, or the Elements, or Beaſts of Prey. And all this, perhaps, for denying a Word, or a Phraſe, which was never known in Scripture, though impudently pretended to be fetched from thence.

Such

SUCH dreadful Dominion had they uſurped over the Bodies and Souls of Men, and ſo implacably did they exerciſe it! And, to fill up the Meaſure of their Falſhood and Cruelty, they blaſphemouſly pretended to be ſerving God, when they were acting as if there were none.

THOSE who ſet up for Infallibility have found a good Excuſe, if it were true, for the inſupportable Tyranny, infinite Murders, and wide Devaſtations, which their Religion has every-where introduced. But thoſe, who exact a blind Obedience to Decrees, which they own to be human, and annex Penalties to Poſitions, which we know to be falſe, and they know to be diſputable; and, in fine, act and dictate as if they were infallible, without pretending to be ſo; are ſo utterly without all Excuſe, that I know no Language which affords a Name proper for their Behaviour.

THE *Mahometan* Impoſture was profeſſedly to be ſpread by the Sword. It had nothing elſe but that and Libertiniſm to recommend it. But to propagate the Chriſtian Religion by Terror or Arms, is to deny it. It owns no ſuch Spirit. It rendered itſelf amiable, and gained Ground, by a Principle of Peace and Love. Theſe were the Means inſtituted by Chriſt, for the Recommendation and Defence of his Goſpel; and they, who would chuſe

contrary ones, charge him with Folly, and have Ends to ſerve very different from his. Ambition, Pride, and Revenge, may make good Uſe of Violence and Perſecution; but they are the Bane of Chriſtianity, which always ſinks when Perſecution riſes. The vileſt and moſt profligate Men are ever the greateſt Promoters of it; and the moſt virtuous are the greateſt Sufferers by it. Libertines ſtick at nothing, but they who have the Fear of God, cannot comply with all Things.

PERSECUTION is therefore *the War of Craft againſt Conſcience*, and of Impiety againſt Truth. Reaſon, Religion, and Liberty, are its great Foes; but Ignorance, Tyranny, and Atheiſm, its great Seconds and Support. We ought then conſtantly to oppoſe all Claims of Dominion in the Clergy; for they naturally end in Cruelty. I believe it will be hard to ſhew, that ever the Prieſthood, at any Time, or in any Place enjoyed the Power of Perſecution, without making uſe of it.

G

NUMBER XXV.

Wedneſday, July 6. 1720.

Of CONSECRATION.

HOLINESS is that Character of Purity, which originally and eſſentially appertains to God Almighty (as a Being utterly incapable of Stain and Imperfection); but is alſo aſcribed, in a reſtrained and relative Senſe, to every Act of Devotion, and every Perſon performing it. It is an active and rational Thing; and where it is attributed to Things inanimate or irrational, it is either merely in a figurative Senſe, or in no Senſe at all.

THUS, when the Elements in the Sacrament are ſaid to be Holy, it is meant only of the Uſes to which they are applied, and the Purpoſes for which they are taken; for, though they were conſecrated over and over again; yet, if they are never taken, or never devoutly taken, they have in themſelves no more Holi-

neſs than a common Roll, or a Cup of cold Water.

AND thus, when a People are ſaid to be a *Holy People*, it is meant of their ſincere Love of God, and Conformity to his Will, and of the Actions by them performed in conſequence of theſe good Affections. But if ſuch Actions, though ſeemingly devout, are ſuperſtitious, or hypocritical; there is no more Holineſs in them, than in the *Indians* worſhipping the Devil, or in a Boy's ſaying his Prayers to avoid Whipping.

AND thus, when a Houſe, or a Piece of Ground, is ſaid to be Holy, it is underſtood only of ſome Mark of Holineſs there ſhewn, either by the extraordinary Preſence of God, or by ſome Act or Acts of Worſhip performed there to him. But when theſe Marks of Omnipotence, and theſe Acts of Devotion, ceaſe, that Ground is no more than common Ground, and that Houſe is a common Houſe.

AND thus, *Laſtly*, When the Prieſts are called *Holy unto the Lord*, it is meant only of their aſſiſting at the ſolemn Acts of Adoration which are paid to him. At other times, they are as other Men; as is evident from their living after the manner of other Men.

HOLINESS, therefore, conſiſts only in a virtuous and pious Diſpoſition towards God and

and is only ſhewn by the Actions which it produces. But as Superſtition, eſpecially when governed by Craft, never fails to ſee, or to think that it ſees, Effects and Operations, which neither Religion nor common Senſe can ſhew; hence Men have been generally perſuaded, that Places, Buildings, Utenſils, and Garments, did actually poſſeſs a real Holineſs; that Stones and Brickbats are bleſſed; and that Timber, Surplices and Bells are exceeding godly Bodies.

To help on this wretched and ſenſeleſs Credulity, the *Pagan* and *Popiſh* Prieſts have gone ſo far as to compoſe Farces of *Legerdemain*, called by them *Offices* of *Conſecration*; the whole End of which was, they pretended, to beſtow Godlineſs upon dead Earth, and Things inanimate. Thus they deceived the People in the Name of the Lord, and gravely made Speeches (which they called Prayers) over Wood, Stones, and Iron; by virtue of which, the ſaid Wood, Stones and Iron were obliged to become good Orthodox Lumber, and as ſanctified Bodies as the other Members of the Congregation.

IF one was to demand of theſe Reverend Worthies, *Who required theſe Things at their Hands?* I doubt it would prove a hard Queſtion; and probably, the impertinent Inquirer would be diſpatched for Satisfaction to *Satan*,

or the Inquiſition ----- An effectual and orthodox Anſwer to ſuch buſy Unbelievers, and often practiſed with terrible Succeſs!

BUT as I live in a Nation where ſuch Superſtitions and Cruelties are, I bleſs God, at an End; I take Leave to be amazed at the Aſſurance of thoſe Popiſh Conſecrators, who thus impiouſly pretend to draw down an Attribute of the Almighty, and endow with it what Spot of Earth they pleaſe. Will theſe inſolent Deceivers ſay, that God Almighty cannot hear as well, and as favourably, a Prayer put up from a Ship as from a Chapel? Or in what Part of Scripture are we told, that he will be rather worſhipped at *St. Peter's* than upon the *Alps*; or at *Loretto*, or any other *conſecrated Place*, rather than in a Booth, or a Barn; provided the Worſhip be performed with equal Piety? Or does e'er a Text in the *New Teſtament* inform us, that one Piece of Earth is holier than another? or that any Man, or Society of Men, can make it ſo?

IF conſecrated Ground have no more Holineſs in it than other Ground, how is divine Worſhip more acceptable in it than in other Ground? And if it have ſome uncommon Sanctity in it; let thoſe concerned tell us what it is, how it is, and by what certain Signs we ſhall know it: And whether it keep all the ſaid Holineſs to itſelf, and

and amongſt its own inanimate Heap of Stones, Timber, and Nails; and then what are *We* the better for it? Or whether the religious Bricks and Mortar do in good earneſt communicate Part of their Piety to the People: And if ſo, In what manner do they perform this? And how does it appear firſt, and operate afterwards? But if all this be a Myſtery, let them ſhew us where it is revealed in Scripture, wherein all other Myſteries are revealed.

IF by Conſecration any Change be made, the ſame muſt be either viſible, or only myſtical. If the Change be viſible, then it comes under the Teſt and Examination of our Senſes, and muſt be evident to all Men: But if the Change be purely myſtical, it muſt be revealed to all. So that we muſt either have the Evidence of Senſe, or the Evidence of God's Word and Authority, which is as good. But where neither of theſe Proofs appear, our Faith and Aſſent ought neither to be demanded, nor given, if demanded.

IF Prayers be more prevailing with God, and divine Service more welcome to him, when they come from conſecrated Ground; then all Worſhip and Devotion ought to be performed only at Church; and Family Religion ought either to be neglected, (as lame and inſufficient) or every private Houſe ſhould be

conſecrated, and then every Houſe would be a Chapel, and every ſuch Chapel a Church. I would be glad to know, why only one Houſe in a Pariſh ſhould be conſecrated, that is, made fit to pray in; and why not every Houſe, for the ſame Reaſon? For, nothing that helps Devotion ought to be omitted, ſuch Omiſſion being doubtleſs a great Sin.

BUT if it be allowed, that People may pray to as good Purpoſe *out of* conſecrated Ground, as *in* it; how are Prayers at Church better than in a Chamber, or the Fields? Or, why ſhould the Prayers of Five hundred have more need of conſecrated Ground, than the Prayers of One, Two, or Three? Or, if a Place become Holy by the Devotions performed in it, then every Place where Devotions are performed, is as Holy as another; and if ſo, pray what Uſe of a Form of Words, and a particular Office, for that Purpoſe?

SUPPOSE a Church to be conſecrated, and yet never after uſed; is it, for all this, Holy? Or, ſuppoſe that it has been uſed for all the Purpoſes of a Church, and yet was never formerly conſecrated; is it, for all that, not Holy?

EITHER the Scripture is not a ſufficient Rule of Worſhip, or this Buſineſs of Conſecration, in *Popiſh* and *Pagan* Countries, is a needleſs, empty, ſuperſtitious Foppery, an evi-

dent

dent Trick of Prieſtcraft; as if the Prieſts could change the Nature of Things, and confer the Grace which they have not themſelves, upon Stocks and Stones, that have not, nor can have, the leaſt moral Goodneſs, or Pravity, in them. A General of an Army may as modeſtly and rationally contend, that the Ground, on which his Pavilion ſtands, is valiant Ground; and that the Ticking, of which it is made, is courageous Ticking. And, according to the ſame way of Reaſoning, there is prodigious Policy in the Boards that compoſe the Council-table: The Carpet is a long-headed Carpet, and the Wainſcot and Chairs underſtand wonderfully well the Intereſt of *Chriſtendom*.

IF Devotion communicate a Tincture of itſelf to Wood and Walls; the Pravity of ill Actions muſt, by the ſame Rule, diffuſe itſelf, and taint all the Houſe or Fields were ſuch ill Actions are committed. A Jobb of Lewdneſs muſt needs debauch the Curtains greatly, and the Bed-cloaths muſt partake of the Iniquity; and were juſtly puniſhed by Fire in *Herefordſhire* for that Reaſon: At which Execution, I am told, a certain devout Perſon now living, was a very zealous and uſeful Aſſiſtant. Every Counter and Shop-board in the City muſt, for the like Reaſon, be guilty of unpardonable Trick-

ing and Lying; and for Falſhood and Diſſimulation, Heaven have Mercy upon ſome great Buildings at the Court-end of the Town!

I WOULD here be glad to know the preciſe Extent of the Influence which Holineſs and Vice have upon the inanimate Creation. Is a thick Church-wall as quickly and fully impregnated with them as a thin one? And do they never extend an Inch beyond the Church and Church-yard? Or is the Church equally Holy, whether much Devotion, or little, be performed in it? Or have the Popiſh Prieſts ſet Bounds to the Godlineſs of the Ground, and the Building; and ſaid ----*Thus far, or thus deep, O Ground! ſhall thy Holineſs extend, and no farther?*

IF Conſecration ſignify any thing more than a Declaration, that ſuch a Place is ſet aſide for the Worſhip of God, I wiſh it could be explained and proved; and the rather, becauſe Things of the moſt ſimple and obvious Nature have, by the Guile or Superſtition of deſigning Churchmen, been rendered, to the credulous gaping Multitude, myſterious and tremendous; the natural Enthuſiaſm which reſides in the Mind of Man, having always made him the Prey and Property of Deluſion and Deluders.

HAPPY, thrice happy, are we, who live in a Country where all this *Pagan* Idolatry, and theſe Monkiſh Fooleries, receive no Countenance from

from our Laws; but, on the contrary, are forbid and puniſhable by them. The Laity at the *Reformation* had ſeen what Uſe the Prieſts made of this dark Juggling, and of theſe *Hocus Pocus* Tricks; and, therefore, would not ſuffer them to be played over again, to deceive ſuperſtitious and inchanted Bigots, by making them pay great Prices to be buried in conſecrated Ground, which roſe, like the Value of Jewels, as they approached nearer to the Bodies of Saints, or to the Altar, where it ſeems the Devil could not come at them; with many other advantageous Frauds, which I ſhall hereafter expoſe to the World, when I treat again upon this prolific Subject.

G.

NUMBER XXVI.

Wedneſday, July 13. 1720.

Of FAITH *and* MORALITY.

RELIGION and Virtue conſiſt in doing good Actions, or in a Diſpoſition to do them. Theſe being in our Power, as we perform or neglect them, we merit Praiſe or Blame. But in Matters of Speculation, or Doubt, or ſuch as are not neceſſarily attended with ſome Conſequences, it is of no Moment on which Side of the Queſtion we ſtand. Where there is no Certainty, or Significancy, there can be no Duty. Faith without Works, in Scripture, has but a very indifferent Character: It is ſaid to be dead; and we all know, that what is dead, is uſeleſs.

IF you would know any Man's Affections towards God, conſult his Behaviour towards Men. Though his Profeſſions be ever ſo voluminous; though his Zeal be ever ſo noiſy; though

though he believe by the Lump, and ſwallow Creeds by Dozens; yet if he be immoral, he is worſe than an Infidel. What is the Uſe of Belief, but to govern our Practice, and beget good Deeds? We all ſee the Neceſſity of living well; but to believe well, and do no more, is the ſame Thing, with regard to others, as not to believe at all: And, with regard to ourſelves, worſe.

A WORTHY Life infers worthy Principles; but a baſe Behaviour contradicts and diſhonours an honeſt Profeſſion. Will any one tell me, that a virtuous Heathen is not a better Man, and more in the Favour of God, than a profligate Chriſtian? A *Pagan*, who violates not the Laws of Truth and Peace, is, in my Eyes, an infinitely more religious Perſon, than a turbulent and forſworn Chriſtian Prieſt, though he wear a Mitre.

SOCRATES, *Plato*, *Cato*, and *Brutus*, were excellent Perſons, though they were only governed by the ſimple Dictates of human Reaſon, and were utter Strangers to Creeds and Fathers, and our preſent Orthodox Notions eſtabliſhed by Law. Who, that has any Care for his Soul, any Honour for his God, or any Love for Mankind, would not rather chuſe to be animated by the rational and beneficent Sentiments of theſe *righteous Gentiles*, than be poſſeſſed

poſſeſſed with the fierce and inhuman Spirit of *Father Laud*, *Frier Francis*, or *Doctor Bungy*, though they were all ſound Believers? I would have mentioned *Ariſtotle* here with the other *Antients*; but I find, that though he was very Orthodox, and a great Enemy to Dr. *Clarke's Arian* Principles*, yet this true Believer was a very wicked Liver. However, as a true Friend to the Church, *he died the Death of the Righteous*, and, 'tis ſaid, enjoys *everlaſting Life* †.

BESIDES; ſaying, is not proving. If we would be thought Chriſtians, we ought to ſhew ourſelves Chriſtians. Living well, is the beſt and only Evidence we can give, that we believe well. If a Man profeſs his Faith in Jeſus Chriſt with one Breath, and ſwear falſly by his Name with another, Why ſhould I give credit to one who ſo effectually contradicts himſelf? We do not credit the Propoſitions of Mathematicians, till they have gained our Aſſent by Demonſtration: And why ſhould we truſt any Man's Profeſſions of Faith and Morality, before he has, by Works of Faith and Morality,

* Emanuel de Moura, *and ſome other Orthodox Writers ſay, that* Ariſtotle *was a ſteady Believer of the Trinity.*

† *This is the Opinion of* Sepulveda, *a learned Man in the* 16*th Century.*

The whole Article of Ariſtotle, *in Mr.* Bayle's *Dictionary, is well worth reading.*

proved

proved them ſincere? If we hear a Man full of the Praiſes of Loyalty, and yet ſee him every Day rebelling, would we not take him for a Madman, or a Deceiver? A good Life is beneficial both to ourſelves and others, but a good Belief, without it, is neither.

BUT beſides, this ſame Belief is perhaps the neceſſary Conſequence of Evidence; and if ſo, what is unavoidable, is not virtuous. Where is the Praiſe or Merit of feeling the Heat of the Sun, or the Severity of the Winter; or of hearing Sounds, when our Ears are open? To believe in Chriſt was and is inevitable: His Miracles command Aſſent. But to do his Will, is a Trial of our Piety and Virtue. And for our Saviour himſelf, would his Law have been ever received, or his Doctrine believed, had he contradicted both by his Example? Or could the Apoſtles, without leading the Lives of Chriſtians, have gained Converts to Chriſtianity?

I HAVE placed Faith and Practice in this Light, to ſhew how little valuable the Pretence of believing well makes Men, unleſs they alſo live well. I would therefore bring our High Clergy to be tried by this Teſt. If they be more zealous for Orthodoxy than Piety; if they abhor a virtuous Man, who prefers the Dictates of his own Conſcience before thoſe of their Ambi-

Ambition and Authority; and openly court and honour any Perſon, who is obſervant of the Prieſthood, though he live at manifeſt Defiance with Heaven; if they treat Unbelievers and Debauchees as pure Churchmen, and devout Chriſtians as Schiſmatics, Heretics, and the Lord knows what; their Faith is ſelfiſh and vain, and ſuch Religion is falſe and abſurd.

CONFORMITY is the Word! It is the Mother of all Virtues, and the Sanctifier of all Crimes. It is, in fine, All in All. And yet, ſo weak and blind am I, that I take this ſame applauded Conformity to be in ſome Caſes a very great Sin. If a Man, for Inſtance, in the Worſhip of God, follow the Authority of any Church whatſoever, and diſſent, at the ſame time from the Suggeſtions and Perſuaſions of his own Conſcience; it is certain, that he does not worſhip God at all, but mocks him; adores Men, and condemns himſelf. If, on the other hand, he think his Soul in Danger, or in no way of being edified in any Church, though ever ſo Orthodox; he ought to deſert it, and join with that which appears to him better. If I ſhould thwart or diſturb my Conſcience, by bowing faſhionably to the Altar, I would ask the Clergy, Whether ought the Altar, or my Conſcience, to be firſt or moſt regarded? He who believes at random, and obeys blindly, may

may give great Satisfaction to Churchmen; but he neither knows the Goſpel of Truth, nor obeys the Precepts of the Holy Ghoſt.

IT is a ſurpriſing Thing, the Selfiſhneſs and Pride of Man. What Prieſt is there, that (in Diſputes of the moſt trivial Nature) does not grow hot and eager for Victory, and angry if his Opinion does not prevail? In Spiritual Affairs, this Spirit of levelling all Men to our own Conceits, is ſtill fiercer; and Religion, which was given and intended to ſubdue the Paſſions, is turned into an Engine to raiſe them. We are much more zealous, that Men ſhould conform to us, than to Holineſs; and would rather have them obedient, than godly. How many High-Church Parſons would not rather ſee their Pariſhioners *drunken Churchmen, than ſober Diſſenters!*

LAYMEN are at leaſt as capable of judging of *Error* as the Clergy, and more proper, as having no Intereſt on either Side of the Queſtion. However, the latter have uſurped this Privilege wholly to themſelves, and with good Policy; for it has wonderfully anſwered their great Ends of Power and Wealth. We are not therefore to wonder, that many of them give much more Countenance and Quarter to the moſt heinous Immoralities, which are only Sins againſt God, than to the leaſt Variation from

from an Orthodox Opinion, which is an unpardonable Sin againſt themſelves. The greateſt Miſtakes, when involuntary, are innocent in the Sight of God; but in the Eyes of the Prieſts, the ſmalleſt are often damnable. Nay, many a Man has been pronounced a Heretic, and delivered to Hell and the Devil, for his pious Searches after Truth, and his devout Adherence to it.

THUS we ſee, that God may be pleaſed, and ſome of the Clergy provoked, by one and the ſame Action. From hence it wofully happens, that weak Men and Profligates, who will do and ſay as they are bid, without any Biaſs from Reaſon and Conſcience, are careſſed, encouraged and promoted; while the Wiſe and Virtuous, who cannot abandon Truth, and the Fear of God, to promote the Craft, and humour the Pride, of aſſuming Men, are brow-beaten, reproached, and perſecuted. Mr. *Whiſton*, and the Parſon of his Pariſh *, are known Inſtances of this ſhameful Truth.

I KNOW ſeveral, who, notwithſtanding their avowed Disbelief of the Goſpel, and all Revealed Religion, are in high Eſteem with the High Clergy; becauſe, though they deny our Saviour, they reverence his Succeſſors; and

* St. Andrew's Holbourn, *where the late Dr.* Sacheverell *was then Rector.*

are

are zealous for the Hierarchy, though they laugh at Religion. The Truth is, if a Man be but a hearty Churchman, it is never asked whether he be a Chriſtian. Profligates, void of common Honeſty, and common Senſe, have been, and are ſtill, reckoned true Friends to the Church, and courted by the Eccleſiaſtics, as their Patrons and Defenders. And indeed, where Religion is turned into Faction, ſuch Meaſures and Alliances are natural and neceſſary.

BUT in the Opinion of us Chriſtians, a wicked Liver, whether he be a Believer or no, is an Enemy to Religion, which is propagated and ſupported by Example; and to human Society, which is maintained by the Bonds of Morality. Whereas a good Man, though a Heretic, is a Friend to Religion, Virtue, and his Country. To conclude: He who is a Rebel to the King of Kings, is like to prove but an ill Subject to his Vicegerent; and as bad a Pattern to his Fellow-ſubjects.

G.

NUMBER XXVII.

Wedneſday, July 20. 1720.

Of FASTING.

DR. *Burnet* tells us, in his *Letters of Travels*, that the Prieſts of *Italy* have found out a Secret to make Men miſerable, in ſpite of all the Abundance and Profuſion wherewith Nature hath bleſſed that happy Climate. They meaſure their own Happineſs by the People's Calamity; enjoy no Pleaſures in which they take any Part; nor are ſatisfied with all the Plunder and Depredations which they make upon them, unleſs they can alſo heighten their own Reliſh, by making the Little which they leave to the Laity, inſipid and taſteleſs.

As one Inſtance of this Truth; he informs us, that the Prieſts have made it a Principle of Religion in the People, to mingle Water with their Wine in the Cask, which ſoon ſours it; whereas they always keep their own pure and un-

unmixed, becauſe they ſay, that it is to be uſed in the Sacrament: And ſo he obſerves, that Travellers can drink no good Wine, but what they buy from the Convents.

FOR this, and ſuch-like Reaſons, they preach Penances, Mortification, Faſting, and a Contempt of worldly Riches, and of all thoſe earthly Bleſſings, which indulgent Heaven has given to wretched Mortals, to alleviate their Sorrows, ſweeten their Calamities, and make the nauſeous Draught of Life go down; whereas we cannot better ſhew our Acknowledgment and Gratitude to the Author of them, than by making a proper Uſe of the good Things which he has given us, and by enjoying them in every Degree, which will not deſtroy that Enjoyment, and change it into a Misfortune.

IF we drink or eat more than our Heads will carry, or our Stomachs digeſt, Diſtempers, Indiſcretions, and ſometimes Murders, ſucceed; and, if we ſpend faſter than our Incomes will ſupply, there is a ſure Foundation laid for future Want and Miſery: But nothing can be more abſurd or impious, than to make Abſtinence from Food or Pleaſures meritorious, any farther than it conduces to Health, or qualifies us for Buſineſs. Almighty God reſerved but one Tree in all *Paradiſe* from our firſt Parents,

but

but the Prieſts would keep them all from their Poſterity.

BESIDES, the Luxury of the Rich (when it does not exceed the Bounds of Virtue and Prudence) is the Wealth and Support of the Poor, and the beſt-judged Charity: For, what we give in groſs Sums to, or for the Uſe of, thoſe who appear to be in Neceſſity, is often miſtaken, and applied to maintain preſent Idleneſs, or reward paſt Extravagance; and ſometimes too, I doubt, is pocketed by thoſe who are truſted to diſtribute it: Whereas whatever is laid out upon the Produce of Labour, and for ſuch Manufactures as employ Multitudes of People, can never be miſapplied. It might eaſily be made appear, that there is not a Piece of wrought Silk, Linen, or Woollen Cloth, which has not contributed to the Maintenance of more than an Hundred thouſand induſtrious People, who muſt be all kept alive one way or other.

AS it is the higheſt Crime to deſtroy our Beings, ſo it is proportionably wicked to endeavour to make them miſerable: The Glory and Honour of God are beſt conſulted, in promoteing the Happineſs of Mankind. It is profane, and a kind of Blaſphemy, to attempt to perſuade People, that the good God takes Pleaſure in the vexing and tormenting his Creatures. He

is

is not pleaſed by human Sacrifices, nor by human Sufferings of any Kind: A pale Aſpect, the Griping of the Guts, wry and diſtorted Faces, and being Ghoſts before our Time, will contribute to no Ends of Religion; and therefore, I confeſs, that I cannot ſee how Faſting can ſerve God, or anſwer any Purpoſes of Devotion, or indeed can enhance any Appetite, unleſs to a good Dinner.

NOTHING conſequently can be more ridiculous, than for the *Romiſh* Clergy to tell us, that any Part of Religion conſiſts in faſting Days, and faſting Weeks; which oblige the wretched People to inſipid and unwholſome Diet, whilſt they indulge themſelves, and riot in the richeſt Wines, and the luxurious Diſhes of Salmon and Turbot; with all the coſtly Inhabitants of the liquid Element. Beſides, it is impolitic, as well as uncharitable; it diſcourages Trade and Induſtry, depopulates Nations, and depreciates Matrimony, by rendering the People unable to maintain and raiſe their Families.

RICHES and Labour are two Words which ſignify the ſame Thing. Nature ſpontaneouſly ſupplies but little to the Uſe of Man; all the reſt is the Produce of Invention and Induſtry: And therefore whatever does contribute to make Mankind idle, and leſs uſeful to one another,

conduces ſo far to their Want and Miſery. One Holy-day, ſtrictly kept, robs the Poor of more than a whole Year's Charity will ſupply. A little looſe Money picked up at the Church-doors, and afterwards divided between the Parſon, Churchwardens, and a few favourite Objects, will make but poor Amends for the Taxation of the Nation, and of every Perſon in it, with the Loſs of a Day's Labour, and Profit of his Trade; which Loſs probably cannot amount to leſs than Two hundred Thouſand Pounds, without having any regard to the Extravagance and Debaucheries committed upon thoſe Days; which often conſume the Acquiſitions of a Week, and render the common People liſtleſs, and unwilling to return to their Labour again. I may therefore venture to affirm, that there is more Charity in taking away one Saint's Day, than in building and endowing Twenty Colleges.

HOWEVER, to do Right to my Countrymen, and their genuine Clergy, I muſt freely confeſs, that we ſuffer very little from the penitential Obſervance or faſting Part of our Holy-days; for the Poor do not faſt at all, unleſs they can get nothing to eat; and the Rich, in Imitation of their Guides, hold out no longer than is neceſſary to digeſt their former Exceſſes, and get better Stomachs to a double Dinner;

as old experienced Sinners often live a Day or two with Sobriety and Innocence, to enjoy a Debauch the remaining Part of the Week. At the Univerſities, as I am told, it is quite given up, and there is not more *Epicuriſm* than on thoſe Days; and to their Churches there are antient Veſtries annexed, which are the conſecrated Repoſitories of Pipes, Sack, and Tobacco, where the Reverends take regularly a Whiff and a Cup, to prepare them for the Fatigues of the the enſuing Service.

BUT how little ſoever Holy-days, and ſtated Faſts, contribute either to the temporal or eternal Happineſs of the Laity; yet the *Romiſh* Clergy have been able ſufficiently to find their own Account in them. When all other Shops are ſhut, theirs are open; where they ſell their Spiritual Cargo of Grimaces, Viſions, Beads, Indulgencies, and Maſſes, for Silver and Gold, Lands and Tenements; and, to enhance the Value of their Merchandize, and perſuade the People of the Reaſonableneſs of ſuch an Exchange, they make it their Buſineſs, and exert all their Endeavours, to depreciate worldly Happineſs, and cry down all the good Things of this Earth, that they may have them all to themſelves. If they can extinguiſh the Appetites which God has given us, and teach us the Secret to live

without our Eſtates, or to make us think it dangerous to live on them, they hope to have them for their Pains: For who can have a better Title to our Superfluities than our ſpiritual Guides, who have inſpired us with ſo much refined Devotion, and have given to us laſting Eſtates in Paradiſe, in lieu of a few momentary Pleaſures, and frail and earthly Tabernacles below?

By theſe Arts, and many others, which I ſhall ſhew in the Progreſs of this Paper, the Prieſts are become poſſeſſed of ſo much Dominion and Wealth. T.

NUMBER XVIII.

Wedneſday, July 27. 1720.

Of AUTHORITY.

BY Faith is often, if not moſt commonly, meant, An inward Perſuaſion, or determined Aſſent, of the Mind to a religious Propoſition, affirmed or denied; and ſuch Conſent can never be given but by the Conveyance, and

and from full Conviction, of the Senſes, or the manifeſt Operation of the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore muſt depend wholly upon what appears to be infallible Inſpiration, or infallible Information. In this Senſe of the Word, I doubt there can be no ſuch Thing in the World; for as no Man living ever ſaw the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, or can prove his particular Syſtem from ſelf-evident Propoſitions, or can be ſure that he is inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt; ſo he cannot have Faith in this Senſe, whatſoever he himſelf may imagine.

THEREFORE the only reaſonable Senſe of the Word is, *An Aſſent of the Mind to the Truth of a Propoſition, upon probable Arguments, or upon the Teſtimony of other Perſons*; which can never produce Certainty, but only *Opinion* or *Belief*; which muſt be ſtronger or weaker, according to the many Degrees of Probability. A probable Evidence can only produce a ſuitable Aſſent; and when any thing does not appear at all probable to us, we cannot avoid diſſenting as to the Truth of it. Almighty God does not require of us to give the Lye to our Underſtandings, and to put out and extinguiſh the only Light he has given to Men, by which they can diſcern Truth from Falſhood, and Virtue from Vice.

THE Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, who were evidently endowed from Above with extraordinary Gifts and Graces, were undeniable Witneſſes of the Truth of the Goſpel, to thoſe who ſaw their Miracles: And their Writings, and the Teſtimony which they bequeathed to their Followers, ſealed, as it was, with their Blood, have paſſed the Examination of many Ages, and conſtitute the higheſt Degree of human Probability, and conſequently carry along with them an irreſiſtible Authority, and can admit of no Diſobedience or Diſpute: They are a real Authority, in the moſt ſtrict Senſe of the Word; I mean, as it is applied to the Propagation of religious Opinions, and as producing a lively Faith next to Perſuaſion.

BUT no Deciſions or Reſolutions of uninſpired Men are, or ought to be, of any Weight with us, but ſo far as they will bear the Examination of our Senſes, and our Reaſon. The only Motive which any Man can have to believe, or to put this Confidence in another, is, that the Perſon truſted is not deceived himſelf, and will not deceive him; neither of which he can have any tolerable Aſſurance of: For no Man is infallible; and the graveſt and moſt ſolemn Pretenders are as eaſily cheated as the mere Vulgar; and, what is more, will as often lye, and cheat others; and therefore there can be no ſuch thing

as

as Authority in this Senſe amongſt Men. For let a Matter in itſelf be ever ſo certain, I am by no Precept human or divine obliged to believe it true, till it is proved true; and it is the Buſineſs of my Reaſon alone to diſtinguiſh what is ſo from what is otherwiſe.

GOD's Word, though to be believed without Proof, yet ought firſt to be proved to be his; which Proof it is the Province of my Underſtanding to examine. The Words and Allegations of Men, or of the Church, ought, before they are believed, to be proved, either by Divine Authority, or by Reaſon: If by Reaſon; then Reaſon muſt judge of Reaſon, and every Man who has it, is a Judge: If by Divine Authority; even here our Reaſon muſt be ſatisfied, whether it be Divine Authority or not. So that human Authority is either nothing at all; or at moſt only an Opportunity given, or an Invitation made, to examine by private Judgment, the Truth of what it ſays.

ALL Books, therefore, except the Holy Scriptures, and all Names, except thoſe of our Bleſſed Saviour, and his inſpired Followers, ought to be of no Authority with us, any farther than to convince our Underſtandings by ſolid Arguments, and ſelf-evident Truths; and a Beggar, or a Cobler, when he can do this, is ſo far

intitled to equal Credit, or, if you will, to equal Authority, with Councils and Fathers.

EVERY Man, that reaſons with you, appeals to your Reaſon, and his Arguments lie at your Mercy, whether you will believe them or no; and every Man, who brings you only his Aſſertions, ought alſo to bring you his Proofs, or elſe you are at full Liberty to reject or deſpiſe them: It adds nothing to his Weight in this matter, that perhaps he wears a cloven Cap, or a ſable Gown: There have been no greater Deceivers of Mankind, than ſuch as have worn theſe Emblems of Gravity; and indeed Gravity has ever been one eſſential Characteriſtic of Impoſture.

THERE is no Authority in ſounding and ſanctified Names, whether they be thoſe of *Archbiſhops*, *Biſhops*, *Prieſts* or *Deacons*. It is very certain, that theſe goodly Words are ſo far from having any Charm in them againſt Deceit and Roguery, that the completeſt of all Villainies, and the moſt maſterly and miſchievous of all Deluſions, have been, and ſtill are, protected and propagated by them in *Popiſh* and other Prieſt-ridden Nations. *His Holineſs*, and *Moſt Holy*, are Terms appropriated to St. *Peter's* Chair, (and in our precious Pope *Laud's* Days they began to be current at *Lambeth*) although moſt that filled that Chair, have lived at Defiance

fiance with God and Man, and were the greateſt Deceivers and Diſturbers of the World.

NOR is there any certain Authority in Learning of any Kind or Degree. Who are better Scholars, or greater Rogues, than the *Jeſuits*? Who was a more learned Man, or a greater Simpleton, than Mr. *Dodwell*? And, as to his genuine Anceſtors, *Aquinas* and *Scotus*, thoſe celebrated Founders of the Schools, who have been long the infallible Guides of the infallible Church, they were the moſt voluminous and moſt unintelligible Dunces, that ever dabbled in Sophiſtry, and darkened common Senſe.

PRAY what Evidence of Truth neceſſarily attends the Knowledge of the Oriental Tongues? The *Jews* underſtand *Hebrew*, and the *Turks Arabic*; and yet both continue fierce and obſtinate Enemies to Chriſtianity.

NOR are Men the more to be truſted, merely becauſe they are acquainted with Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and the Fathers. As to the Fathers, they are guilty of grievous Errors againſt Orthodoxy, and Church Power; inſomuch that Father *Petavius* the Jeſuit has pretended to prove, that moſt of them were infected with Hereſy, eſpecially in their Notions about the Undivided Trinity. We all know, that St. *Auſtin* (the Foreman of all the *Latin* Saints and Fathers) was for admitting Children to the *Lord's Supper*,

contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of our Church of *England* as by Law eſtabliſhed. St. *Jerom* derives Epiſcopal Power from the Inſtigation of the Devil, which is alſo an impudent Reflection upon our Orthodox Church. St. *Baſil* (I think it was) very fairly challenged the Emperor, his Liege Lord, to fight him; in Defiance of the Doctrine of Paſſive Obedience, which is the peculiar Doctrine of our High Churchmen; and which unleſs a Man believes and practiſes, he cannot be ſaved. St. *Ambroſe* bullied *Theodoſius*, the *Lord's Anointed*; and refuſed to admit his Imperial Majeſty to partake of the Lord's Body, till he had made his humble Submiſſion. St. *Gregory Nazianzen* gives a miſerable and vile Character of Synods and Councils; and his Grace of *Canterbury**, when he was Biſhop of *Lincoln*, and before, did the ſame. Dr. *Prideaux* ſhews *Tertullian* to have been a credulous weak Man, often miſtaken and miſled.

As to Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, which is nothing but many large Volumes, containing ſome few of the Squabbles of the Biſhops and inferior Clergy with one another, and all the World; I know not whether the Uſe of it can much alter for the better any Man's Life and Prin-

* The late Dr. *William Wake*.

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ciples; ſince the moſt which he can learn by it is, that the Reverend Heroes of the Story were eternally cuffing and contradicting one another. Nothing of Humility, nor of Charity, nor of Uniformity, nor of Certainty, is to be found amongſt them, or learned from them. And I know not at this Day any prevailing Opinion of any Sect of Chriſtians, but what is both countenanced and condemned by one Father, or another.

LASTLY; even the moſt apparent Piety, the moſt diſintereſted Mind, and the moſt unblameable Life, though to me certain Signs of a good Man, yet in the Eye of our beſt High Churchmen, are only *ſhining Sins*, and cannot intitle the Poſſeſſor to the leaſt good Word or Tenderneſs, much leſs to any Authority amongſt Men. Dr. *Clarke*, Mr. *Whiſton*, and others, are undeniable Inſtances of this Truth.

UPON the Whole, Authority, as it is generally underſtood, is a Word pregnant with Danger and Nonſenſe. It is a falſe miſleading Light, or rather none at all; for thoſe who follow it, do only grope in the dark: When we blindly truſt to another, our own Eyes grow uſeleſs, or may give Offence.

THIS ſhews its Peril; and for its Abſurdity, it will appear from hence, that it is impoſſible to truſt to one Authority, without truſting

to more. For, either my own Reaſon muſt be conſulted and followed; and if ſo, there is an End of all Authority: Or elſe, I muſt truſt to ſome Authority to direct me what Authority I muſt truſt to. And, if I have Liberty to chuſe my firſt Guide, why not alſo my ſecond, and ſo on? For no Reaſon can be given, why I may rely on my Judgment in one Caſe, and yet muſt reſign it in juſt ſuch another Caſe.

BUT if no Choice at all is left us in theſe Matters, pray how ſhall we diſcern Hereſy from Orthodoxy, and a *regular* Set of Eccleſiaſtics, from an *irregular*? If I am born in *Scotland*, and educated in the *Presbyterian* Way; muſt I continue in an invincible Antipathy to what is there called *proud*, *lordly*, *Prelacy*, and ſuperſtitious Surplices, and Popiſh Ceremonies? Or, have I a Right to examine and embrace the Doctrine and Diſcipline of our Orthodox, Eſtabliſhed Church? Or, am I to embrace them without examining them? And is my Judgment to approve and condemn, only what the Parſon approves and condemns; and, in all other Spiritual Matters, to lie ſtill, and take its Reſt? If I leave one Church for another, out of Judgment; how am I to behave myſelf when my Judgment changes? Or, is it our Duty to conform in ſpite of our Inclinations? And

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have we no Right to diſſent with Conſcience and Conviction on our Side?

To conform without conſenting, is a Contradiction, and a Mockery to the Spirit of Religion: And to conform, becauſe I approve, is no Compliment to Authority, but, indeed, deſtroys it, and juſtifies every Man in every Religion, provided he have taken all neceſſary Pains to find out the true one. If I have a Liberty to inquire which is the beſt Church, I have alſo a Liberty to blame its Errors, if I ſee any, as well as to admire its Excellencies: And the Authority of no Man or Men ſhall determine me in either, in Oppoſition to my Reaſon. If I praiſe the Advantages of any Church, I am myſelf praiſed by its Votaries, for doing Juſtice to thoſe Advantages, which my Reaſon ſhews me: But if the ſame Reaſon diſcover Blemiſhes in it, I am condemned by the ſame Votaries, for what I cannot help: So that I am applauded for Seeing, and damned for Seeing, at the ſame Time, and from the ſame Principle; namely, that of Paſſion and Partiality.

THERE is therefore no Authority but Two, Scripture and Reaſon. The Scripture is our Rule of Faith; and Reaſon, where God gives not his Spirit, is our Rule for underſtanding the Scripture.

G.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXIX.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 3. 1720.

Of EDUCATION.

IT has often been the Subject of my ſerious Thoughts, to what Cauſes are owing the Depravation of Virtue and Morality in the World, and the ſeeming Decay of human Underſtanding. If we read the *Greek*, *Roman*, and other antient Hiſtories, we ſhall find another Race of Men, than ſeem to be now exiſting upon the Face of the Earth. *Alexander* had conquered the *Eaſt* before Thirty: *Scipio* and *Hannibal* performed Actions of great Eclat before Twenty: *Pompey* triumphed over *Europe*, *Aſia* and *Africa*, long before his Middle-age. Indeed, through the whole *Roman* Story, we find that their Generals, Orators, and Stateſmen, ſhone in full Luſtre in their early Youth; and could demand their Diſcharge from public Buſineſs, before the Age at which we are often thought qualified to enter upon it.

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THIS Difference ſure cannot be owing to any real Decay of Human Nature, which undoubtedly has been always the ſame ſince the Flood; or the contrary, 'tis to be preſumed, ſince Almighty God hath communicated to us the marvellous Light of his Goſpel, and has made himſelf more known to Men, that their Faculties are bettered and improved. Beſides, this Difference is obſervable only in ſuch as are intitled, by their Birth and Fortunes, to the moſt liberal Education; for, as to Arts and Sciences, the Moderns eminently (as I conceive) exceed the Antients: They are better Mathematicians and Mechanics, better Navigators, better Muſicians, and better Husbandmen, and they attain early to their greateſt Perfection in theſe Arts; and therefore we muſt look out for other Cauſes to account for this *Phænomenon*, which I conceive to proceed only from their different Manner of Education.

THE Antients were inſtructed by Philoſophers; and the Moderns are taught by Prieſts: The firſt thought it their Duty to make their Pupils as uſeful as poſſible to their Country, and the latter as ſubſervient to themſelves, and the Intereſts of their Order: One endeavoured to inſpire them with noble and generous Sentiments, equally fit for Dominion or Subjection; and the other always inſtil into them abject, ſordid,

ſordid, and puſillanimous Principles, to qualify them to be proper Tools for their own low Purpoſes: In ſhort, the firſt made it their Study and Buſineſs to inlarge and improve their natural Faculties, and growing Reaſon; and the latter to pervert, ſtifle, and extinguiſh, every Approach towards true Knowledge, and public Virtue.

As ſoon as the Emperors and their Courts came into the Church, Ambition and Pride got in too; and the Innocence and Simplicity of primitive Chriſtianity became corrupted, and changed into outward Pomp and Pageantry: The Clergy bethought themſelves how (in the modern Phraſe) *to make the beſt of their Bible:* Unluckily it was all againſt them; and though they read it over and over, they found it everywhere levelled againſt ſpiritual Pride and Domination, and they could not ſo much as pick out one direct Text for their purpoſe.

WHAT muſt be therefore done in this momentous Affair? The Holy Writings were diſperſed abroad, and could not be ſuppreſſed, and yet Riches and Power were of indiſpenſable Neceſſity to the Good of the Church. Why! ſince they could not get them out of the Peoples Hands, they contrived how to render them of as little Uſe as poſſible there; and, in order to it, they pointed all their Batteries againſt human Reaſon, and polite Learning, and made

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it an heinous Sin to read any Heathen Authors: By which means, in an Age or two, few could read at all: And the *Romans*, once ſo famous for Knowledge, Virtue and Humanity, became (for the moſt part) ſunk to the loweſt Dregs of Barbariſm, Superſtition, and Ignorance.

BUT leſt the curious and inquiſitive Part of Mankind ſhould not be wholly diverted from the Search after Knowledge, they invented, and ſubſtituted in its room, a ſenſeleſs Jargon of undefined, inſignificant, and canting Terms, confuſed Ideas, and indiſtinct Images; which they perſuaded the World to eſteem profound Learning, and deep Wiſdom: And then they reduced and determined all Queſtions in Philoſophy and Religion by this Gibberiſh; and he got the Victory, who could hold out longeſt, and moſt confound his Auditory, by entangling them in an endleſs Labyrinth of Nonſenſe. Men of Wit and Genius were diſtaſted at a Study, which would coſt them ſo much Pains to attain, when they could find neither Pleaſure in the Purſuit, nor Profit or Improvement in the Conqueſt; and having no Notion of any other Learning, they conſented to let the Clergy have it all to themſelves.

WHEN they had ſo reduced the Laity to this happy and deſirable State of Stupidity and Submiſſion, they took away their Bible from them

them too; or, which was the ſame thing, they continued it only in a Language, which by the many Conqueſts upon the Empire, and the Revolutions of Time, was underſtood by none but themſelves. And now, having converted their Hearers into Aſſes, and Beaſts of Carriage, they bridled them, they ſaddled them, they yoked them, and put heavy Burdens upon them, till they ſo overloaded them, that they grew reſty, and overturned their Burdens, and Riders too.

THUS the World came by the *Reformation*; which diſperſed the thick Miſt of Superſtition and Ignorance, that then overſhadowed all *Chriſtendom*: The Laity were reſolved to be no longer hoodwinked; but a general Diſpoſition aroſe in *Europe*, to revive antient Learning, and uſeful Knowledge: And the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors were ſought after, reſcued from Duſt and Worms, and diligently read. Many Princes promoted theſe Studies, and gave all due Encouragement to Virtue and Learning: But this noble Spirit of Liberty laſted no longer than the Lives of thoſe Princes, and while the Images of ſacerdotal Oppreſſions were deep engraven in Mens Minds; which, like all other Things, wore out by degrees.

THE principal Expedient, neceſſary to ſecure all the reſt, was never thought of, or, at leaſt,

leaſt, quite forgotten; namely, that of retrieving the Education of Youth out of the Hands of the Prieſthood, and of reforming the Univerſities, which were contrived and eſtabliſhed by Popes, to ſupport their own Pride and Power over the unhappy Laity. Inſtead of ſuffering theſe to continue Seminaries of Faction, Tyranny, and Eccleſiaſtical Uſurpations, they ſhould have been converted into Schools of Virtue, Liberty, Knowledge, and true Religion: But the old Leaven was permitted to remain, and the Clergy had ſtill left to them the Education of the Nobility and Gentry in moſt Countries; and they were educated accordingly.

IT became a Maxim in the Univerſities abroad, That thoſe, who were born to large Poſſeſſions and Eſtates, had no need of Learning; and ſuch were always encouraged or connived at, in miſ-ſpending their Time in Idleneſs and Luxury, and were generally made the Companions of their Governors and Tutors in their Pleaſures, who were perpetually inſtilling into their tender Minds tyrannical or ſlaviſh Principles. But when they met with Youths of ſprightly Wit and Genius, who either from their own Inclinations, or the Impulſe of their Relations, would not be diverted from the Purſuit of Knowledge; they induſtriouſly put them upon a wrong Scent, and perplexed and confounded

founded their Underſtandings with metaphyſical Whimſies, and an artificial Cant, out of which many of them could never extricate their Senſes; and ſuch as did, ſpent often as many Years after they came into the World to do ſo, as they loſt before in the Univerſities, to be upon the Level with thoſe who had never been there.

THIS ſoon became again the State of Learning and Knowledge amongſt the Nobility and Gentry: Either they had none at all, or ſuch as they were the worſe for having: Inſomuch that thoſe, whoſe Birth and Fortunes intitled them to be Legiſlators and Governors of Mankind, were themſelves the Slaves and Dupes of Pedagogues and Chaplains, were contented to do all their Drudgery, and be humble Inſtruments of their Pride and Luxury.

HOWEVER, as the Prieſts could not agree amongſt themſelves about ſharing the Laity, and as Printing was before this Time invented in *Chriſtendom*, which made it impracticable to ſuppreſs all Copies of uſeful Books, or to hinder them from being read; many Perſons had the Virtue and Reſolution to oppoſe Clerical Uſurpation, and kept alive ſome Spirit of Liberty, in ſpite of all the Efforts of Prieſtcraft and Deluſion, ever ſupported by worldly Intereſt, and too often by worldly Power.

IT is a hard Circumſtance for Truth, that in moſt Countries it muſt ſubſiſt upon Converts; and Education, Intereſt, and Authority, muſt combine againſt it: But if, notwithſtanding all their Efforts, its own clear Evidence, and irreſiſtible Authority, can make ſuch a Progreſs in the World, what might we not expect, if the Approaches and Paſſages to it were made eaſy and advantageous, and proper Rewards and Encouragements given to the Promoters and Diſcoverers of ſuch Philoſophy and Knowledge, as will make Men uſeful to themſelves and their Country? It cannot be doubted, but antient Virtue, and antient Eloquence, would then revive again; the Nobility and Gentry of *Chriſtendom* would reſume their proper Stations, and exceed the inferior Part of Mankind, as much in public Spirit, Courage, and Wiſdom, as they do in Fortune and Quality; and poſſibly might in time as much outſhine the *Greeks* and *Romans* in thoſe great Endowments, as they evidently ſurpaſs them in thoſe Arts and Sciences, which the Prieſts do not pretend to teach, and ſeldom know any thing of.

T.

NUMBER XXX.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 10. 1720.

Of EDUCATION. *Part* II.

NOT all the Cruelty of Tyrants, the Subtilty and Craft of Prieſts, or the Malice of Devils, have ever invented or brought a greater Plague or Miſchief upon Mankind, than falſe Learning. We may be upon our Guard againſt all other Calamities; but here the Enemy is within us, and admitted at all times to the innermoſt Receſſes of our Souls; where he acts the Part of a treacherous Friend, betrays us under the Pretence of ſerving us, and adminiſters Poiſon in Cups of ſeeming Nectar and Ambroſia: We are gradually deprived of our Senſes, whilſt we think we are improving them; become Fools by Induſtry, and great Application; like *Tantalus*, are ſtarved with an imaginary Banquet at our Mouths; and, in the midſt of an appearing Profuſion of Knowledge, want common Senſe; and, what is yet worſe, are

are inſenſible of our Diſtemper, and conſequently are incapable of a Remedy.

OUR Minds, as well as Bodies, are eaſily diſtorted, and put out of their natural Frame; Abſurdity and Nonſenſe is to be learned, and good natural Faculties may be improved into fooliſh ones, or none at all. A Man, like a Veſſel, is capable of holding only a certain Quantity, which, when it is full of one Liquor, is incapable of receiving another; and even when the firſt is drawn out, it generally leaves a Tincture behind it. The Mind, when rightly ſet out, uſefully employed, and upon proper Objects, will improve, and every Day ſtrengthen; but when converſant only with Viſions, Phantoms and Whimſies, will aſſimilate with the Company which it keeps, and thus by degrees loſes its diſtinguiſhing Faculty.

A PROPER Exerciſe, and a natural Uſe of the Limbs, give Health and Vigour, as well as Gracefulneſs, and becoming Motion; whereas Grimace, and abſurd Poſture, are Qualifications only for Jack-Puddings and Merry-Andrews. One who has been long taught by an ill Maſter, is farther from a good Dancer, than another who has never begun, becauſe he muſt unlearn all his ill Habits, to be in the Circumſtance of him who has not learned at all; as a Man, who gets out of his Road, is farther from his Journey's

End,

End, than if he had ſtaid at home; and commonly muſt return thither again, to find out his right Way.

WHOEVER ſpends his Time in reading fooliſh Books, and in ſtudying uſeleſs or falſe Speculations, will grow the greater Coxcomb, the greater Progreſs he makes: He is learning backwards, and undermining and deſtroying the firſt Sparks of Knowledge, and in time will be fortified and impregnable againſt common Senſe. A great Philoſopher tells us, that Ignorance is a middle State between Knowledge and falſe Learning; that is to ſay, one who is wholly untaught and unimproved, is as much above a learned Man, in the common Acceptation of the Word, as a Man well educated does exceed another who has had no Education at all: The Capacity of the firſt is intire, and ſuſceptible of Information; whereas in the other, all the Avenues and Paſſages to Wiſdom are deſtroyed or locked up, and he is ſo puzzled, perplexed, and confounded in a Maze of improved Nonſenſe and Abſurdity, that he never can get through it, or out of it. The Acquiſitions in ſuch Learning have been aptly compared to the Fluttering and Rumbling of a Swallow falling down a Chimney, who, when he is at bottom, flies about, and hurries backwards and forwards to every Window, and every Corner of the Room,

Room, to make his Eſcape; but never thinks of the Way by which he came in, and ſo becomes an eaſy Prey to the firſt Enemy which aſſaults him.

WHOEVER is converſant with Scholaſtics, and has any Underſtanding of his own, (if ſuch a Correſpondence can poſſibly be) muſt readily aſſent to this Truth. It is even grown a Proverb in the learned Language, that *Merus Scholaſticus eſt merus Aſinus*: What an Appearance do theſe Reverend Drones, and accompliſhed Dunces, make amongſt Mankind! How are they exceeded in Converſation, agreeable Addreſs, and uſeful Knowledge, by the youngeſt Gentlemen, by Soldiers and Merchants, and often by Mechanics and Tradeſmen, who can only write and caſt Accompts! Nothing but the Solemnity of their Habits, and the auſtere Gravity of their Phiz, Mien, and Behaviour, hinders them from being the Jeſt and Contempt of Women and Boys. It is ſaid, that *Villiers*, Duke of *Buckingham*, once took a Conceit to invite all the deep Chins about the Town to a magnificent Entertainment ſpread upon a long Table; and he made himſelf amends, by ſitting at the Upper end, and enjoying the Viſto. Indeed I cannot deny, but I have ſometimes had ſuch a ſort of ill-natured Pleaſure, in imagining that I ſaw ſome of the Governors of the Two

Univerſities (with others of their Betters, who ſhall be nameleſs) uncaſed of their reverential Robes, and dreſſed up with Hats and Feathers, Sword-knots, and laced Coats, and in that Equipage marching in ſolemn Guiſe, like a Call of Sergeants from *Temple-Bar* to *Weſtminſter*.

THEY give us, in ſome degree, the ſame Figure, when they ſhew themſelves in the World abroad: Like Snails, they carry their Houſes about them, and bring Pedantry, Conceit, ſour Humour, Bigotry, magiſterial Grimace, and ill Manners, into all Converſations where they mix; and indeed are ſeldom fit for any polite Converſation whatſoever. They have neither the Temper of Chriſtians, the Reaſon of Philoſophers, or the Affability of Gentlemen, and therefore are juſtly deſpiſed by them all. *Frier John*, as I remember, asks of *Panurge* or *Pantagruel*, in *Rabelais*, What is the Reaſon that the Houſhold Prieſt is uſed worſe than any one elſe in the Family? And, I think, he anſwers; Becauſe he neither ploughs the Ground like the laborious Ox, nor carries Burdens like the uſeful Horſe, nor keeps the Door like the faithful Dog; but, like the Monkey, runs about every-where fouling the Houſe, chattering and making a Noiſe, biting Peoples Fingers, and doing nothing but Miſchief; and ſo every body has a Stroke at him, and gives him a Knock as he paſſes by.

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THE Writings of many of theſe ſolemn Gentlemen are of the ſame Kind, and carry the ſame tragical and grim Aſpect. They would be Dictators in Faith and Science, and ſo their Books are full of the Spirit of Pedantry, falſe Zeal, and Ill-breeding; and, under the Appearance and Affectation of Learning, contain only Paradoxes, Uncertainty, harſh Severity, or aukward Buffoonry. Any one who is the leaſt acquainted with theſe dogmatical Zealots, theſe punning Inquiſitors, muſt own that I have done Juſtice to their Characters, and the Merit which runs thro' them; unleſs in ſome Inſtances, moſtly about this great Town, where an uncommon natural Genius, Liberty of Mind, generous Birth, or a free Converſation, has got the better of a conſtrained and corrupt Education.

I THANK God, ſuch as have of late Years had the Honour of being admitted to great Dignities, and been brought into the Legiſlature or Royal Councils, are of the latter Sort: But what Figure have others formerly made in the Senate-houſe, or Council-board? How much below young Noblemen, who had never been at the Univerſities, or had juſt forgot what they had learned there, and rubbed or filed off College Ruſt by polite Converſation? In one, you might have obſerved an Eaſineſs of Addreſs, Softneſs of Speech, and Freedom of Thought; in the other,

Starchneſs of Behaviour, Sourneſs of Looks, and ſtarved Conceits, urged with fierce and impetuous Rage. A late noble and great Genius of our Age and Country compares them to thoſe Groteſque Figures, and Dragon Faces, which are often ſeen in the Frontiſpiece, and upon the Corner Stones of old Buildings: They ſeem placed there as the Defenders and Supporters of the Edifice; but with all their Grimace, are as harmleſs to People without, as they are uſeleſs to the Building within.

T.

NUMBER XXXI.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 17. 1720.

Of CEREMONIES.

PLAINNESS and Simplicity are not more inſeparable Marks of Truth, than they are of true Religion, which wants neither Paint nor Pageantry to recommend itſelf to the Hearts of Men. It wins the Affections, by the Force of its Perſuaſions; and the Underſtanding, by the Reaſonableneſs of its Precepts. It abhors Violence, as

as oppoſite to its Nature; and deſpiſes Art and Policy, as below its Dignity. Human Ornaments may hide and diſfigure, but cannot preſerve nor improve its intrinſic Beauty, and divine Luſtre: And Pomp and Grimace, as they are no-wiſe a-kin to it, ſo neither are they the Effects of it, nor bring any Advantage to it. On the contrary, they tend to fill the Mind with groſs Ideas, or ſullen Fear; and ſo create Superſtition inſtead of Piety, and Farce inſtead of Worſhip.

GOD himſelf has told us, that he will be worſhipped *in Spirit and in Truth:* Which ſhews, that Love and Sincerity conſtitute Devotion, and that Religion reſides in the Mind. As to bodily Religion, and corporeal Holineſs, the Goſpel is ſilent about them; leaving every one at full Liberty to behave his own way in the *Practice of Piety.*

IT is juſtly eſteemed the Glory and Felicity of the Chriſtian Religion, that by it we are releaſed from that grievous Yoke and Bondage of Ceremonies, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear. It is a Religion of Reaſon, void of all Superfluities, and trifling Impertinences.

MEN cannot judge of one another's Thoughts and Inclinations, but by Words and Actions: And, becauſe it would be both troubleſome and ſilly to be on every Occaſion haranguing our Friends and Superiors, upon the profound Vene-

ration which we profeſs for their Perſons or Characters; it has become neceſſary to agree upon ſome outward Forms, to denote internal Reſpect. And this I take to be the only good Reaſon which can be given for ſuch Manner of Addreſs or Ceremony. It is ridiculous, either by Sounds or Geſtures, to tell a Man over and over again, what he knows already; and therefore, the moſt intimate Friends, and old Acquaintance, make but little Uſe of Shew or Compliment; and thoſe who make moſt, are ever found the leaſt ſincere. But how ſenſeleſs and abſurd muſt it be to entertain Heaven with ſuch Grimaces! that Heaven, which ſearches our Hearts, and knows our moſt hidden Thoughts; and will not be deceived by outward, arbitrary and fallacious Marks of inward Diſpoſition!

IT can never be conceived, that the All-merciful and Omniſcient God ſhould, by the ſending of his Son, aboliſh, or ſuffer to be aboliſhed, the whole *Jewiſh* Legion of Ceremonies, though appointed by himſelf in Perſon; and ſhould graciouſly condeſcend to eſtabliſh a new Diſpenſation, deſtitute of all Ceremony, and exterior Grandeur; and yet ſhould leave it to the Ambition of deſigning Men, or to the Folly of weak ones, to invent and impoſe a freſh Load of Rituals, in Oppoſition to the plain Genius of the Goſpel. This would be for the All-merciful to be merciful

in

in vain; for the Creator to reſign his Power to the Creature; and for God to recall his own Injunctions, which he once gave for a gracious and wiſe End, ſince ceaſed, that Men may enforce theirs, for a weak or a wicked one.

NOTHING is, or can be, pure Religion, but either what God commands and tells us he will accept; or what is dictated by eternal Reaſon, which is the Law of Nature: And whatever is ſuperadded, however dignified by a venerable Name, is no Part of true Religion; which, as has been ſaid, can be ſupported by nothing but *Divine Revelation*, or *Divine Reaſon*. When both theſe are wanting, we wander in the Dark, and worſhip blindfold; being led by the Hand of Conjecture and Invention, which are uncertain and endleſs.

THIS is ſo true, that where-ever there is true Religion, there are few Ceremonies: And, on the other hand, where Ceremonies abound, there Religion is either utterly loſt, or miſerably decayed; and, in Popiſh Countries, it is more or leſs viſible, according as Ceremonies and Bigotry (which, like Cauſe and Effect, go always Hand in Hand) are more or leſs practiſed or promoted. Thus, in *France*, where, through the Commerce of that Kingdom with *Proteſtants*, there are ſtill ſome Remains of common Senſe, and conſequently of Religion; God Almighty is worſhip-

ped as well as dead Men, though not ſo much: Whereas, in *Italy* and *Spain*, the Saints have deprived their Maker of all Devotion; and the *Bleſſed Virgin*, St *Dominic*, St. *Jago*, and St. *Antony*, are, by theſe hot-headed Bigots, made Governors of Heaven and Earth, and the Givers of eternal Life; and conſequently are become, next immediately after the Prieſts, the only Objects of their Adoration. If you deprive them of their Saints and their Ceremonies, there is not the leaſt Face of Religion left amongſt them.

SO little has Chriſtianity gained by Ceremonies, that a great Part of Mankind have, by adopting them, baniſhed all true Religion. If they were introduced, as it is alleged, to kindle Piety; I am ſorry to ſay, it has ſo happened, that this Heat of Devotion has quite drank up the Truth and Vitals of Religion; and the blind Compliance with a ſenſeleſs Cringe, invented and injoined by a Popiſh Prieſt, is made of more Importance and Merit, than the Poſſeſſion of all Moral and Chriſtian Virtues, without it. Religion, good Senſe, and Humanity, are inſeparable Friends; but a ſuperſtitious Fondneſs for Ceremonies is a Contradiction, and an Affront to all the Three.

THE Teachers of Mankind have, for the greateſt Part, been the moſt unteachable of all Men; and theſe our Guides to Peace have been always the foremoſt to break it. They have ſeen, from

from time to time, the Violence and ungodly Effects produced by their Contention for human Forms, Habits, and Deciſions; and yet, where the religious Laity and the Law did not interpoſe, to reſtrain this unchriſtian Behaviour in *Churchmen*, they have not only ſtill adhered with Obſtinacy to their Inventions and Impoſitions, but frequently made it their Buſineſs to broach new ones, and to throw about freſh Balls of Strife and Cruelty.

CEREMONIES were firſt brought in under a very plauſible Pretence; namely, that of aiding and promoting Religion: But we have ſeen, by above a Thouſand Years Experience, that theſe its pretended Friends always become its real Rivals, and ſucceſsful Enemies; and, by the Help of thoſe, whoſe Intereſt it was to contrive and ſupport them at any rate, never failed to baniſh it as far away as their Power extended.

IT is pretended, that the Invention of ſtated Ceremonies and Garments is juſtified by theſe Words of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians, Let all Things be done decently, and in Order.* Which Words are only a Precept to avoid Immodeſty and Confuſion, in their religious Aſſemblies. Two, for Example, were not to ſpeak at the ſame time: One was not to ſing Pſalms, while another prayed. Neither Love nor Trade was to be the Buſineſs of their Meetings; nor Tythes

and their own Power the Drift and Buſineſs of the Preachers: Chriſt was not to be confounded with *Belial*; nor Pride and Dominion with Meekneſs and Chriſtianity: Exhorting was not to be mixed with Railing, nor Praying with Curſing; nor were the People to be taught to hate one another: In ſhort, God was to be adored with the Heart and Affections, and not with a Fiddle, or a Pipe and Tabor.

I DO not find, that the Apoſtle's Words were underſtood in any other Senſe than this, by thoſe to whom they were addreſſed: It does not appear, that immediately upon the Sight of St. *Paul's* Epiſtle, the *Corinthians* concluded, that Prayers ſhould be ſaid in Surplices; and that the Faithful, as ſoon as the Word was given, ſhould kneel, ſtoop and ſtand, or turn to the Right or Left, like a File of Muſqueteers; or that they were to nod towards the Eaſt, as if the Almighty kept his Court only there.

NOR were the *Corinthians* directed by this Text to play *Popiſh* Tricks over the Forehead of a Babe baptized, as *ſure and certain Signs* of Regeneration: Nor were they commanded to put up their Petitions in Quavers, and to ſing their Prayers as well as ſay them; nor was that ſubtle Diſtinction then and there found out, of bowing at the Name of *Jeſus*, but not at the Name of Chriſt, or of God.

ALL

ALL theſe pretty Faſhions were unknown to the Apoſtle and his Correſpondents; and their Genteelneſs and *Significancy* have been long ſince diſcovered by the *Romiſh* Clergy in the latter Days; and indeed, it is now become impoſſible to make one's Court well without them.

THE Words *Decorum* and *Significancy*, which are made uſe of to juſtify the Celebration of Ceremonies, are Words of ſuch prodigious Latitude, that the World does not agree, nor ever can agree, what it is that does come properly under their Denomination, and what does not. With the *Turks*, it is *decent* to be covered at Devotion; with *us*, to be bare-headed. How is the wearing of a Perriwig, or a Cap, more *decent* and orthodox than the wearing of a Hat? How is a Prunella Gown, or a Lawn Frock, more ſignificant than a Cloth Coat? Is God Almighty better pleaſed with a Cambrick Band than with a Muſlin Cravat? And is an Organ-Loft more acceptable to him than plain Country Piety, that has neither Motion nor Muſic in it?

IF Men be at Liberty to invent and injoin *One* unneceſſary Ceremony, Why not *Two*? And if Two, Why not Two thouſand? When ſuch a Power is once granted, it cannot be eaſily, nor indeed reaſonably, limited. If the Clergy can oblige me to throw my Head into my Boſom, upon their pronouncing certain Sounds; they

may, by the ſame Right, upon pronouncing different Sounds, oblige me to run it againſt a Stone Wall: Nay, which is ſtill worſe, whoever has an Authority to direct my *Manner* of Worſhip, muſt have alſo a Power to direct the *Matter* of it, and may *command* me WHOM to worſhip as well as HOW.

SUPERSTITION in the People, and Power in the Prieſts, were the true Ends and Conſequences of creating *Popiſh* Ceremonies; for as to their Significancy, it was a mere Bubble and Pretence. Such a Plea would juſtify endleſs Phrenſy and Fooleries; and every Madneſs would be made a Myſtery. For Inſtance, we might be made to walk bare-footed into the Church, to *ſignify* the Sanctity of the Place; and to crawl upon all Four out of it, to *ſignify* the Humiliation of our Hearts. A Match of Cudgel-playing every *Sunday* might be inſtituted, to *ſignify* our ſpiritual Warfare; and a Game at Blindman's-buff, to *ſignify* the Darkneſs of our Underſtandings. In ſhort, any thing might be made to *ſignify* every thing; and any Puniſhment be inflicted upon the profane *Gainſayer:* And upon this foot may be juſtified all the *Pagan* and *Popiſh* Fopperies that ever were, or ever could be, invented; and nothing can be ſaid againſt all the many Garments, and many Colours, and many antic Geſtures uſed by the *Romiſh* Prieſts at this Day.

IT

IT muſt be evident to every intelligent Man, that all this pretty Pageantry and *Raree-ſhew* can never make Men more acceptable to God, who will not be gratified or obliged by a Jigg, or a Tune. But, I believe I may ſafely affirm, that if all this Merry-making, and jovial Devotion, in the *Popiſh* Churches, do no manner of Good, they muſt needs do Harm, becauſe they divert the Mind from deliberate Devotion, and calm Repentance, and can at beſt only work it up to a wild and enthuſiaſtic Worſhip.

HOWEVER, though this pompous Parade in Piety does no Service to Religion, it effectually anſwers the End propoſed by it; and contributes vaſtly, as every thing elſe does, to the Advancement and Grandeur of the *Romiſh* Clergy, as it turns Mens Thoughts from divine Objects to a ſuperſtitious Veneration for Poſtures, Habits, Grimaces, Cringes, Utenſils, *&c.* all invented by Prieſts, who are always ſure to appoint themſelves Maſters of the Ceremonies, and to be well paid for their deep Knowledge in this momentous Science. Beſides, it liſts into their Service great Numbers of People; ſuch as Organiſts, Fiddlers, Singing-men, with all the piping and chanting Crew, as well as Artificers of various Kinds. It engages Men of Pleaſure, and Ladies, in their Intereſts; it catches the Multitude by the Ears, and the Eyes, and ſets them a ſtaring; and it alleviates

alleviates their own Drudgery of frequent Preaching and Praying: It alſo ſerves the Purpoſes of Interludes in the perpetual Tragedies they are acting; which they render leſs terrible, by playing, like *Nero*, upon their Harps, in the midſt of Conflagrations of their own making.

WHAT a Bleſſing is it to this Church and Kingdom, that all this Farce in Devotion is forbidden by the *Act of Uniformity*, as well as by our *Homilies!* As ſhall be further taken notice of, when I treat again upon the ſame Subject.

G.

NUMBER XXXII.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 24. 1720.

Of CEREMONIES. *Part* II.

MY laſt Paper treated of ſuperſtitious Ceremonies; and this ſhall contain a Proſecution of the ſame Subject.

THE Pagan Religion conſiſted altogether in a vaſt Number and Variety of ſtrange and ſenſeleſs Cere-

Ceremonies; and, being fooliſh and falſe, it could conſiſt of nothing elſe. Its Votaries had, for their Religious Task, certain frantic Actions to perform, certain wanton Motions to make, or certain mad Races to run; ſometimes galloping about the Streets like Lunatics, ſtark naked, and ſometimes half naked; or in a religious antic Dreſs, *ſignificantly* ſuited to their Behaviour. They were to be religious with their Heads, Feet, Joints, and their *other Organs*: They were alſo to utter certain harſh and devout Sounds, which had no Meaning, but were prodigious *ſignificant*, and, being very ridiculous, were very *decent*.

DURING all this holy Exerciſe, which was edifying in proportion as it was mad, their Minds were poſſeſſed with a drunken Feſtivity and Wantonneſs, or with Crazineſs and enthuſiaſtic Fear. They were either lewd or raving, Rakes or Fanatics. It never entered into their Heads, nor did their Prieſts ever put it into them, that Religion was a ſober Thing, conſiſting in the Exerciſe of Reaſon, and the Practice of Virtue. No; a Spirit of Sobriety, or a Ray of Underſtanding, would have blown up the Authority and Dominion of the *Heathen Parſons*; and therefore, the poor *Lay Pagans* were not ſuffered to know, that a Man might be a religious Man, without being a good Dancer, and pleaſe God without roaring and running Races.

THIS

THIS was the *godly and wholſome Diſcipline*, invented and inſtituted by the *Pagan Clergy*, for the Uſe and Edification of the deluded and idolatrous World. *Action* and *Outſide* was all that they knew of Religion; and therefore their Superſtition took great Delight in building and beautfying Temples. They imagined, that the doing of a thing which had any Reference to Religion, was actually a Piece of Religion; and that any Jobb of Work about a holy Place, was, in good earneſt, a Jobb of Holineſs. They might have as rationally believed, that Maſons, Joyners, and Plaiſterers, employed about a Temple, derived Piety and Merit from that Employment.

HAD not Pagan Ceremonies (and *Pagans* were the firſt Inventors of Ceremonies) ſignified nothing, or rather ſomething very bad, as indeed it was evident to every Eye, that they were either ſenſeleſs or impious; our Saviour would never have inſtituted, as he did, a Religion without one Ceremony in it. The Religion of the Goſpel is as pure from Fancies and Ceremonies, as from Pride, and the Spirit of Dominion.

OUR Bleſſed Saviour knew well, that the crafty and profane Prieſts had, by their ſhameleſs Inventions, and filthy Ceremonies, polluted or aboliſhed all Religion; and therefore, in Mercy

to

to Mankind, founded a Religion without Prieſts, and without Ceremonies (as ſhall be fully ſhewn hereafter). For, it is to be obſerved, that while the Eſtabliſhed Church of *Paganiſm* flouriſhed, Prieſts and Ceremonies always flouriſhed or increaſed together.

SUCH was the ſimple Inſtitution of the Goſpel: But when *Popery* began to expel Chriſtianity, Ignorance and Ceremonies were ſome of the principal Engines by which it effected the ſame. For as the Meekneſs of Chriſtians was then converted into the Cruelty of *Barbarians*, and the Plainneſs of the Goſpel into all the deteſtable Fopperies of *Paganiſm*; ſo Holineſs of Heart was changed into Holineſs of Poſture; the Humility of the Soul into bodily Bowings; the Worſhip of God into the Worſhip of *Bread*, and the Piping of Organs: And the Clergy, as they had called themſelves, were no longer cloathed with Meekneſs, but with *Surplices*, &c.

NOR was this mighty Revolution, this unnatural Tranſition from the Beauty and Gentleneſs of Chriſtianity, to the unhallowed Spirit and abominable Rituals of the Heathens, at all hard or impracticable. The People had, by the Idleneſs, Inſufficiency, and Debaucheries of the Eccleſiaſtics, become corrupt and blind to the laſt Degree, and therefore ran readily and chearfully into every new Abſurdity. Whatever the

Biſhop

Biſhop pronounced *decent*, though ever ſo vile or ſilly, his conforming Flock received as *reverend* and *edifying*. A groſs and ſenſual Manner of Worſhip ſuited beſt with the Groſſneſs of their Underſtandings, and the Senſuality of their Minds. They had no Conception of the ſpiritual Nature of the Goſpel, and of that evangelical Grace, which operates internally, and is wholly employed about the Soul, but produces neither Cringes nor Dances, nor Grimaces.

A RELIGION therefore of Ceremonies, which is no Religion at all, agreed well with thoſe carnal Chriſtians, who were taught to place all Religion in Ceremonies. When the ignorant Vulgar are once perſuaded, that Ceremonies are good for any thing, they come quickly to think them good for every thing, and *the more, the merrier!* They are delighted with Shadows, and Myſtery, and Juggling. Ignorance, like every other Habit, is daily improving itſelf, and increaſes in Strength as in Years; it delights to be ſtill plunging into farther and deeper Darkneſs. The leſs People underſtand, the more they ſtare; and becauſe there is nothing in the Goſpel but plain Piety, plain Reaſon, and plain Matter of Fact; therefore it can raiſe no Wonderment in them, and conſequently no *pleaſing Piety:* But ſtrange and *myſterious* Ceremonies can do all this; and, for that Reaſon, have always

always got the better of Religion in all bigotted Countries.

HERE therefore is a glorious and ample Field of Gaping, Sottiſhneſs, and Credulity, for crafty Prieſts to play their Tricks, and ſow Superſtition in. And, indeed, they have topped their Parts, in this Undertaking, with ſuch Dexterity and Succeſs, that their humble and reſigned Votaries do not any longer pretend to carry their own Eyes or Underſtanding: Their very Palates and Noſes are Prieſt-ridden, and dare neither taſte nor ſmell, without an *Eccleſiaſtical Licence*. Thus even the invincible Operations of the animal Spirits, and of the Five Senſes, muſt ſtand ſtill, when commanded by the Prieſt, who can annihilate the Creature, and create his Creator.

AS, under the ſacred Name of God and Religion, the greateſt Irreligion and Impieties have been propagated; ſo, under the Colour and Umbrage of *ſignificant* and *decent* Ceremonies, the moſt ridiculous and immodeſt Uſages have been introduced. It would require more than a whole Paper to expoſe all the many apiſh Geſticulations of the *Romiſh* Maſs; I ſhall only run over a few of them.

THE Prieſt, in the Adminiſtration of Maſs, muſt wear a white Linen Garment, which, I ſuppoſe, muſt ſignify *Whiteneſs*; for I cannot ſee a more obvious Meaning in it. The ſame was

alſo

alſo worn by the primitive Heathen Clergy, when they butchered Bullocks, to appeaſe their Deities.

As he approaches towards the Altar, having great Devotion in his Back-bone, he bows, and bows, and ducks his Head, as if he was playing at *Hop-Frog*. The Altar is alſo covered with a *Surplice*, or white Cloth, which, doubtleſs, ſignifies ſome great Myſtery; but, in profane Eyes, typifies only a Damask Table-cloth. It moreover ſtands towards the Eaſt, which, to be ſure, has a deep Meaning, and ſeems to imply, as if God Almighty was either more merciful or more powerful in that Quarter of the World, (though he made it All) than in any of the other Three; or, as if he liked that Climate beſt, and All thoſe who bow to it.

He then, after many monkiſh Geſtures and Scrapings, ſays a World of ſhort Prayers, (the whole Service being judiciouſly ſliced into pretty little Morſels of Devotion) and reads Scraps of Scripture; all which Prayings and Readings would not be half ſo wholſome any-where elſe, as they are juſt at the Elbow of the Altar. Then there is a lighted Candle ſtanding by him at Noon-day, probably to ſignify, that there is Light enough without it. Now, in ſome other Churches, the Altar is only illuminated with dark Candles, which, for aught I know, may be equally

equally myſterious and ſignificant. But, upon this great and eſſential Point, I ſhall pronounce nothing dogmatically.

THE Prieſt then mutters Words over the Bread and Wine, which thereupon ſtart into Omnipotent Fleſh and Blood; and the living Jeſus is ſwallowed Whole, in Remembrance of the dead One; and the Prieſt makes his Maker; and the People eat him. The Wine, which the Prieſt very naturally keeps all to himſelf, muſt not be poured out of a Bottle into a Glaſs, which would not be *ſignificant* enough; but out of a Flaggon, which, being of Silver or Gold, and holding more Liquor, is conſequently very *ſignificant*. He repeats, *Lord have Mercy upon us*, very often, to *ſignify* that he does it more than once; and ſpeaks loud, to *ſignify* that he may be heard.

BUT I am quite ſick of this ſtrange ſignificant Stuff, before I have gone through the tenth Part of it. The whole Performance is perfectly Theatrical, and improperly and impiouſly called a Sacrament. It is indeed a wretched, unentertaining Interlude; a ſtupid Farce, of which the Prieſt is the chief Mimic; for mumbling and making Mouths does not deſerve the Name of *Acting*.

WE have had ſeveral Attempts made to revive among us this infamous Mummery in Devo-

Devotion, and theſe apiſh Ceremonies; which are an Affront to common Senſe, and below the Dignity of human Nature, much more of Religion: But ſuch Attempts can never ſucceed, while we enjoy either Liberty or Knowledge. *Archbiſhop Laud*, therefore, when he had bewitched the Court, ſwayed the Sceptre, and deſtroyed the Liberty of the People and of the Preſs, took the beſt Opportunity he could get, to tranſport *Rome* to *Lambeth*; and having married the *Harlot*, he adopted her Trumpery.

A SAMPLE of this Man's Genius for Popery may be ſeen in his mad Manner of Conſecrating ſome new Brick and Mortar, which had been uſed in the Repair of *St. Catharine Creed-Church, London*; as the ſame is related at large by *Ruſhworth*. At his Approach to the Weſt-end of the Church, the Doors flew open, upon pronouncing certain Words out of the *Pſalms*, *That the King of Glory might enter*; and then entered the Biſhop, and, falling down upon his Knees, baptized the Ground, or, which is the ſame thing, pronounced it Holy, *in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and Holy Ghoſt*. Then he threw Duſt in the Air, and played ſome other pious Pranks. Then he pronounced many Curſes, and called upon the People to curſe with him. Then he ſcattered a Basket-full of Bleſſings amongſt all the Maſons, and other holy Mechanics,

Mechanics, who had helped to make that Church fine. He alſo went round the Church in Proceſſion, and told God Almighty and the People, over and over, that that was holy Ground. At laſt, after a Bead-roll of Prayers, and a hundred and fifty Bowings; and after many wild Geſtures, ſometimes advancing, ſometimes recoiling, like one affrighted and crazy, he gave the Sacrament.

BESIDES all this, he removed the Communion-Table, and placed it in the Chancel Altar-wiſe, contrary to the expreſs Direction of the Rubric; which ſays, that it ſhall ſtand where Morning and Evening Prayer is directed to be ſaid. He made Pictures of the Trinity, and cauſed them to be hung up in Churches; and was guilty of many other Popiſh Innovations, all tending to create Fanaticiſm and Superſtition.

THIS Paper grows too long, and leaves me no room to do Juſtice to Croſſes, Square Caps, and fantaſtical Garments: All which, I warrant you, are profoundly myſterious; though, to carnal Eyes, they ſeem only to *ſignify* to make the People ſtare: For every odd Sight ſtrikes the Imagination, and diſpoſes the Beholder either to Laughter or Reverence. Nor have I Time to honour, with a proper Encomium, that ingenious and eccleſiaſtical Device, of explaining the ſublime Myſtery of the Trinity by a Pair of Compaſſes, though it is above all Explication,

and

and even of Conception, unleſs through Faith; and of repreſenting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, by a Triangle in a Circle over the Communion-Table. Was there ever ſuch a pretty Piece of pious Cunning! By the ſaid Triangle is typified and held forth to us, that the ſaid Triangle conſiſts of Three Angles; which is exceeding plain and edifying: And by the Circle is ſignified, that the ſaid Circle is but One Circle, which is prodigious good again! But, that a Triangle is a Circle, and a Circle is a Triangle, Dr. *Waterland* ſaith not.

I MUST, for the ſame Reaſon, paſs over unobſerved, the praiſing of God with Organs, which our Homilies very uncivilly call ſuperſtitious; Cuts in the Common-Prayer Books, tending to prepare People for Idolatry; and Pictures in Churches, for the ſame devout Purpoſe.

G.

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.